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PREFACE.

THERE is, among lawyers, a trite and oft-repeated saying, that "the Law is a jealous mistress, and he who would successfully woo her favours must show no divided attention."

Perhaps, as in all general expressions, there is a certain degree of truth in this, and where the attention is distracted by conflicting engagements, the mind disturbed by clashing pursuits, there cannot be that concentration of energy, thought, and application, so necessary to attain distinction in a science difficult as the law, with its voluminous accompaniments of precedents, details, and technicalities. But if it be contended, as I

have heard, that a man, to know law, or be a good lawyer, should know nothing else, then I utterly deny the assumption, as the invention of purblind ignorance and narrow bigotry.

Did the legal profession inevitably draw such a conclusion as a natural sequence, I would cast it from me with disdain, rather than have my soul "cribbed, cabined, and confined" by its deadening, paralysing influence.

But I fearlessly affirm the converse of this proposition, and that a man, to become an accomplished and skilful advocate, ought to be in possession of almost universal knowledge, keeping its pursuit, of course, in due subordination, and auxiliary to, the main purpose of his daily avocations.

In this commercial country, he ought, at least, to be well acquainted with the general principles of business: if he is engaged in railway matters, he should know something of geology and the mathematics; if in criminal prosecutions or de-

fences, in which death by poisons, questions of insanity, &c., form the subject of inquiry, he ought to have such an idea of chemistry and physiology as will enable him to examine a medical witness with some effect; in short, at Nisi Prius, there is scarcely a branch of science or literature that he is not occasionally required to display some acquaintance with, or his ignorance and incompetence are rendered manifest. These instances form a sufficient refutation of the aphorism I have above quoted, if intended to be broadly and universally applied. But it may be inquired, what hath this to do with the publication of the following specimens of verse? How has the truth or falsehood of a legal saying any connexion whatever with a volume of poems that should entitle it to be discussed in the preface? Simply this—I am a lawyer just passing the threshold of the profession, a barrister of only a few months standing: and some have said, and others have hinted, that I should injure myself,

and mar my future career if I ventured to show that I had spent an hour in the pursuit of anything but legal knowledge. It is to combat this feeling, if it does exist, and to show its gross injustice and absurdity, if admitted without exception, that I make these remarks, and also to ward off from myself any such consequences from attaching my name to the following production, by showing its inapplicability in my particular instance. But what, it may be said, (admitting the value and importance of acquiring really useful knowledge of a miscellaneous kind in a legal education,) what hath that to do with the scribbling of rhymes—the mere indulgence in the cacoëthes scribendi? And here it is that I feel indeed called upon for a defence. Before entering myself a student at the Temple, as well as subsequently, it was a matter of earnest consideration and inquiry how I should best qualify myself for the various and important duties of a practising barrister! By severe and continued application

to study, was the ready answer, and as to that I had been in some degree accustomed, and it was my own free choice, I felt it neither burdensome nor tedious to devote eight hours daily to those authorities which contained the principles and practice of the law, diligently reading text-books, poring over reports, and in due time actively and continuously engaged in the practical duties of the pleader's chambers.

But I also felt that something more than mere knowledge was requisite: a power of giving utterance to it, an ease and facility of expression, skill in combining words, and fluency in uttering them, were important elements of success, and therefore desirable to be attained: to acquire the mastery of language, I applied myself to composition, and after the labours of the day, my midnight hours were devoted to this object, which I consider not the least important part of my legal education: the following pages are a portion of the results.

I believe I may say truly that during my three

years of probation as a student, I have never spent twelve hours of daylight collectively in these compositions, or ever allowed myself to be diverted by a love of poetry from the most unceasing attention, during the proper hours, to the necessary but more prosaic employment of drawing declarations and pleas, writing opinions, and wandering occasionally through the mazes of the statute-book. And shall it now be said that because at the dead hour of night, in the solitude of my own chambers, I have snatched some hundreds of hours from sleep, I am thereby less fitted for the stirring duties of an advocate, or the calmer business of a legal adviser? If after the same application to study during the day, I had spent the evenings and nights in the billiard-room, the tavern, or the theatre, should I better deserve confidence than at this present? I leave it to the good sense of mankind to answer the question. And yet if the above favourite saying be admitted as true, this must inevitably

follow, that I should be more learned, skilful, and sagacious, had I spent my leisure hours in the ball-room, at an evening party, or in scenes of dissipation, instead of passing the long winter nights in the retirement of my own apartments, with nothing but the subdued roar from the distant street to remind me of the busy world without—because I was engaged in the unpardonable offence, for a lawyer, of scribbling rhymes.

Whatever may be the opinion now, it is clear that a great jurist of former times, an admired pleader, and an accomplished scholar, did not think poetry and law incompatible: the younger Pliny writing to Tuscus says—"I know your present attention is principally directed towards the eloquence of the bar; but I would not for that reason advise you never to quit the polemic, if I may so call it, and contentious style. As land is improved by sowing with various seeds, so is the mind by exercising it with different studies, I would recommend it to you, therefore, sometimes

to single out a fine passage of history, and sometimes to exercise yourself in the epistolary style."

"For it frequently happens that in pleading, one has occasion to introduce historical, and even *poetical descriptions*, as by studying the epistolary manner of writing, you will acquire a concise and easy manner of expression. It will be extremely advantageous, also, to unbend your mind by *poetical* compositions; when I say so, I do not mean that species of poetry which turns upon subjects of great length (such being suitable only for persons of much leisure) but those little pieces of the sprightly kind of poesy, which serve as proper reliefs to, and are consistent with, employment of every sort. * * * In this manner the greatest men, as well as the most eminent orators, were accustomed either to exercise or amuse themselves, or rather indeed both."

"It is surprising how much the mind is entertained and refreshed by these little poetical com-

positions, as they turn upon subjects of gallantry, satire, tenderness, manners, and everything in short that concerns life, and the affairs of the world. Besides, the same advantage attends exercising our minds in this inferior species of poesy, as in every other sort; we turn from them to the easier compositions of prose with so much the more pleasure, after having experienced the difficulty of being constrained and fettered by numbers."—B. 7, Let. 9.

And in more modern times, our own Erskine hath somewhere said, that he ascribed his remarkable success at the bar, principally to his diligent and repeated perusal of three books—the dramas of Shakspeare, the poems of Milton, and the English translation of the Bible. I should be glad to have authorities of greater weight, if they exist, cited on the other side.

But it may be observed, that I might still have enjoyed all the benefit (if any) of these poetical exercises, and have escaped the penalty by keep-

ing my own counsel, and not permitting the legal world to see, *with horror*, the manner of employing my hours of leisure. True; but I have so little secretiveness that I care not to conceal, and so much combativeness that I dare to justify these forbidden pursuits, and I want not to appear other than I am. Besides, though self-culture and preparation for forensic honours were motives guiding the choice of means, they did not operate on the subject matter of these compositions: and I naturally availed myself of them as vehicles to convey my sympathy with those of my fellow-citizens who suffered from social evils that admitted of remedy or alleviation, but which the selfishness and prejudice of some, and the ignorance of others, presented obstacles to the present mitigation and future removal of. I have long felt and considered the lot of the millions to be one of degradation and hardship, which, in the nature of things, was not a necessity. I can perceive no reason why it should be so, but what

admits of counteraction, and to assist the efforts making, I rejoice to say, in many quarters, I have contributed this little offering; if I can aid in the least degree to dissipate that ignorance which our immortal bard has beautifully and truly described as the curse of God, and to plume the wing of knowledge whose flight is heavenward, I shall have performed a duty, and conferred a benefit on society.

I cannot urge the hackneyed excuse, that the advice or solicitations of friends have driven me to publication against my own convictions; I alone am responsible for the act, having received neither inducement nor discouragement, for the simple reason that few, if any, knew aught of the matter; some may think this a misfortune, and that my friends (if I had any) ought to have taken care and prevented my exposing myself to ridicule or censure, but whatever may be said or thought on that subject, or on the merit or demerit of my productions in general, this I may fairly affirm,

that they contain nothing repugnant to virtue or morality, and that may not be read aloud in any society. I would I could say as much of some of the noblest productions of genius. The principal portion was written three years ago, before the passing of those measures of commercial reform which have since become law; but which, at the period I speak of, were considered of remote, if not doubtful, attainment. It was to advance the doctrines of reform and social amelioration that I wrote these lines; and to the philanthropists, reformers, and people of this empire, I respectfully dedicate them.

SL. CARTER.

3, CHURCH COURT, TEMPLE,
1*st June*, 1848.

INTRODUCTION.

Fair land of England—country of my birth!
Of Freedom, Valour, Constancy, the nurse,
Renowned for deeds of enterprise and worth,
And social evils grievous to rehearse.

All hail! thy rural shades and busy towns,
Thy swelling uplands and romantic vales,
Thy craggy tors, dark woods, and breezy downs,
And corn-fields waving in the summer gales.

For thee, and thy true glory and repose,
The welfare of the universal whole,
My throbbing heart with earnest wishes glows,
And swell the deep emotions of my soul.

Fain would I strive the glorious fact to see,
The power and omnipotence of right,
Thy sons and daughters virtuous and free,
And equity triumphant over might.

For this I'll bring the powers that I hold—
A slender aid, yet prompt at duty's call—
The *ruling* world's corruption to unfold,
Raising a few, demoralizing all.

Against tyrannic force I lift my voice—
The lordly despot of the injured slave—
Those who in war's dread thunderbolts rejoice,
And turn earth's fairest regions to a grave.

Where'er usurping might uprears its head,
And, rampant, treads its fellow-mortals down,
Shrouding itself in that mysterious dread
With which mankind invest a regal crown:—

Or men who claim prescriptive right to be
Hereditary curses to a state,
Because, forsooth, some distant ancestry
By fire and sword incurred a nation's hate!

Power inherent, irresponsible,
I dare affirm is no *man's* heritage,
But only *His*, who can the nations quell,
And calm the mighty waters when they rage.

The source from whence authority should spring,
That would be called legitimate indeed,
Is from the *people*, where they freely bring
Their unbought suffrages for wisdom's meed.

But not with kings and potentates alone
Is strength abused: far otherwise, I know,
Those ills for which most individuals groan,
From petty tyrants mean oppressions flow.

I never hear a case of man opprest—
Some wanton act of reckless tyranny—
But indignation glows within my breast,
A burning wish to set the victim free.

But most I do abhor those brutal laws,
The legacy of Conquest, ages past,
Of crime, and want, and misery the cause—
More deadly than the blighting simoom's blast.

These, with some other of more modern growth,
The fruit of class, short-sighted legislation,
I picture feebly forth, in honest wrath,
Embodied in the following narration.

ARTHUR MERVYN:

A TALE OF THE PEASANTRY.

Upon the southern border of our Isle,
Where Devon's flow'ry meads with verdure smile,
Low in a vale, to which the hollow roar
Of distant waves is wafted from the shore,
A rustic village, nestling from the breeze,
Stands in the shelter of some aged trees;
On either side fine swelling hills are seen,
Which, circling round, the valley lies between.
At one extreme, the headlands almost meet,
Then to the centre gradually retreat,
And leave a fair expanse of pleasant fields,
Whose varied soil, rich corn and pasture yields.

A little river winds its graceful way,
Marking with verdure where the waters stray.
When first it enters, bounding from the hills,
In falls fantastic by the village mills,
It rushes on with wild and headlong force,
Chafing and boiling in its rugged course.
The jagged rocks convert to foam and spray
Its glancing waters, and impede the way,
Repel with steady scorn the fierce attack,
And dash its brawling current proudly back,
Until at length, by sage experience taught,
(Lessons to man with deepest wisdom fraught,)
Well sobered down, wild frenzy turn'd aside,
Where once it dash'd along, now learns to glide,
And mildly tranquil, lays aside rude force,
To wend through meadows green its placid course.
Just midway down the vale, a little burn
Joins with the river at a sudden turn,
And sweeping round a gently swelling knoll,
Thenceforth the twin streams in one channel roll.
There stood the parish church, serene and still,
Gracing the summit of the little hill,
And looking down upon the scene below,
Where, mix'd in union close, the waters flow.

I love to stand, and contemplate at ease,
A village church just peeping through the trees:
Its ancient walls with lapse of time grown dun,
And latticed windows gleaming in the sun;
The verdant limes, and yew-trees' darker green,
Contrast the hoary buttress viewed between;
Seen from afar, or standing on the ground,
It seems to hallow all the landscape round.—
Beyond the church some cottages appear,
Each with its little garden in the rear;
And, dotted up and down o'er all the space,
Many a whitened farm-house may you trace;
And there the manor-house, a little higher,
The pleasant mansion of the parish squire,
Surrounded by its large and park-like lawn,
Garnish'd with lofty trees, for shelter grown,
And ornament as well, with grassy glades
And pleasant paths, beneath their sombre shades.
Between the park-wall and the village-green,
A little verdant winding lane was seen,
With grass o'ergrown, threading its mazy way,
Where lofty banks exclude the solar ray.
Who that hath seen a Devonshire green lane,
Will e'er forget its character again?

Narrow and devious is the lovely spot,
As form'd in days when turnpike roads were not.
Soft is the grassy carpet to your feet,
While overhead the arching branches meet,
And form a pleasant canopy on high,
To shade you from the fervent summer sky.
When winter, chill and barren, disappears,
And earth once more its vernal mantle wears,
The mossy hedgerow bounding either side,
Is clad in beauty, like an eastern bride;
The lovely springtime flowers of varied hue,
Violets, of Heaven's own celestial blue,
And daffodillies, and the primrose pale,
Breathe out their fragrant essence on the gale.
Around the hazel twigs the wild woodbine
And jessamine in wreaths fantastic twine—
Exhale their odours on the balmy air,
And woo the loiterer to linger there.
Here, in a sheltered nook, a cottage stood,
Within a garden bounded by a wood,
Which, small and neat, afforded ample proof
Of rustic taste beneath the humble roof;
For, though by far the greater part was stored
With vegetables for the frugal board,

The inmates still reserved a sunny side
For roses, heartsease, stocks, and London pride.
There stood the poor man's wealth, the straw-
thatch'd hive,
In which those little busy ones contrive,
By summer labour, to lay up a store
To serve when wintry storms shall loudly roar,
And keep the busy artists within door.
Lessons of wisdom may we learn from bees,
To shun a slothful, self-indulgent ease ;
The summer tide of youth to spend aright,
Work while 'tis day, with winter comes the night:
They teach mankind to use the passing hour,
And draw nutrition from the poison flower.—
An honest peasant lived within this cot,
Who, though to labour daily was his lot,
And eat the bread of carefulness, yet spent
In useful toil his passing time content.
Tis true, the pinching hand of poverty
Would now and then assail his constancy,
And want of work and loss of time would give
Room for contrivance how to eat and live ;
The vegetables that his garden yields,
Potatoes grown in neighb'ring farmers' fields,

And barley bread, the frugal meals supply,
When work is scarce, or necessaries high.
When harvest brought an increase to the toil,
To reap the produce of the teeming soil,
He wrought laborious through the livelong day,
And heeded not the sun's fierce scorching ray:
For then nutritious food his spirits cheer,
(Would that 'twere so throughout the circling year.)
The wife, too, found employment on the land,
To turn the hay or corn with nimble hand,
Rake to the load, or pile the golden sheaf,
Till evening came to bring them both relief.
The earnings then were mostly laid aside,
As farmers for their harvest folks provide;
And these small savings, honestly bestowed,
Paid off the little trifles that they owed:
Bought some new garments, clear'd away the score,
Long chalk'd against them on the huckster's door;
Replaced an inmate in their vacant sty,
And left a slender surplus to put by.
For honesty and steady application,
John Mervyn was respected in his station;
With decent pride he strove to keep aloof
Himself and family from the workhouse roof;

He sought no parish aid, but stoutly tried
To live on what his labour would provide.
The village alehouse seldom saw him there,
For *that* he had no idle cash to spare,
And never hitherto had he been found
A trespasser upon forbidden ground;
He lived and labour'd hard, yet lived content
So he could pay his quarter's club and rent,
But though thus well and peaceably disposed,
Mervyn was human—and at times disclosed
Other and coarser feelings—for his mind
Was not *angelic*, but of common kind;
Though it may injure him, the truth I tell,
He loved those people best who used him well.
Priests may declaim and urge the monstrous law,
That injuries should our affections draw;
Howe'er it be with them, I think they'll find
The constitution of the human mind
More prone to love its friends; and as to foes,
'Tis well if no vindictive feeling glows.
When Mervyn would the parish church attend,
And hear the vicar preaching to this end,
Or speak of mercy, temperance, and truth,
He somehow thought upon the luckless youth

His reverence had sent in gaol to groan
For knocking down a partridge with a stone.
And when he urged the vanity of wealth,
How blest was poverty—the spirit's health—
Visions perverse would float before his eyes,
The stern exaction of the vicar's tithes—
The brotherhood of man, his equal lot,
To whom was given this terrestrial spot,
To rule the monsters of the deep profound,
And hold throughout the earth's remotest bound,
Dominion over every living thing
That crawls, or swims, or flutters on the wing—
This puzzled him, and made him wonder much,
So little of it came within *his* clutch;
If this were true, and man was made to rule,
How had *he* dwindled to a serf and tool?
If all the feather'd race that cleave the air,
Dependent on their Heavenly Father's care,
The untamed tenants of the wild and wood,
Who only sought from God their daily food—
The finny tribes with which the waters teem,
That swim the sea, the lake, or mountain stream—
Were given man to be his heritage,
With whom he might unceasing warfare wage,

How had *he* lost his birthright? whence the thrall
That made a *few* usurp the right of *all?*
Who can make title to the passing wave?
To-day its streams our abbey walls may lave,
To-morrow, where are they? Once gone, they pass
Quite undistinguished in the mighty mass;
Lost in the world of waters that surround,
And wrap the earth through its remotest bound.
Shall then the nations of the peopled deep
Be propertied, like oxen, dogs, or sheep?
They wear no livery, nor tribute pay,
Nor can they be impounded if they stray;
They need not man's providing hand to live,
He does not feed them, nor protection give.
Think not the sacred rights of property
Should wantonly be trampled on by me;
I so respect them, that I would restore
Their rights to all—ay, even to the poor.
The piracy of property is theirs
Who pass usurping laws, and foster weirs,
Thwarting an instinct rightly called divine,
Which leads the salmon upward from the brine,
To seek, in fresher streams, a fitting place
Securely to perpetuate its race.

Those animals reclaim'd by human skill
Justice forbids that stranger hands should kill;
The hares and rabbits by the farmer fed
By him alone should be to slaughter led;
That is, until they come on common land,
Then might they fall by any passing hand;
Or fishpond dug and kept for private use,
Should for the owner only fish produce:
'Tis theirs by right, like that the Scripture tells
Our fathers claim, because "they digg'd those wells."
The denizens of river, sea, or lake,
Those who have skill have native right to take:
Exclusive fishery in private hands,
Claim'd from possession of adjoining lands,
Is an encroachment on that property
Of which our Maker made his children free.
But thoughts like these disturb'd not Mervyn's mind,
He only had some crude ones of the kind,
A sort of glimmering of that true light
Which minds untutor'd sometimes see aright.
He wish'd not on the wealthy to intrude
By trespassing on covert, field, or wood,
But thought it hard that if a hare should stray

Within his reach, upon the king's highway,
He dared not take it, though 'twould clearly be
His by the right that first made property.—
A year of trial had the country past,*
A wretched harvest following the last,
And scanty work, the summer wet and drear,
With war, to make provisions scarce and dear,
Had made the poor man's misery complete:—
With little clothing, and still less to eat,
Slow dragg'd the weary winter months along,
While famine stalked the multitude among,
With hideous spectres marching in her train,
Haggard disease, crime, discontent, and pain.
Some who had corn withheld the meagre store,
Though at starvation price, they hoped for more:
As spring advanced, with pinching hunger spent,
Loud murmurs spoke the people's discontent:
In many parts the population rose,
Which brought them little food but many blows.
Mervyn had struggled on the summer through,
Though work was scarce, he found enough to do,
But the incessant floods of rain which fell
Occasioned loss of time and cash as well:—

* The date of the commencement of this tale is laid about the year 1795.

His fortnight's wages were indeed but scant
Enough to keep them from extreme of want.
The long exposure to the open air
Began at length his vigour to impair;
The constant wet would saturate his clothes,
Which scarcely dry each morning when he rose,
He must put on—his wardrobe was too bare,
To suffer him a dryer suit to wear,
And shivering and chill, go forth again,
To be once more fresh deluged with the rain.
This brought on fever—for a month or more,
Illness and poverty combined, he bore,
The club, his sole support, whose friendly aid
Yielded return for what in health he paid:
But insufficient all their wants to meet,
The pig was sold to purchase food to eat,
The bees, too, went, in spite of superstition,
Which makes their sale unlucky by tradition.
God knows with what sad shifts the winter past,
The father scarce recover'd—toil, and fast,
And misery had worn him to the bone:
Harass'd still more, because that not alone
He suffered thus: his pale and patient wife,
And children in the spring time of their life,

Steep'd their young hearts in sorrow; learnt to know
The heritage of poverty below,
And while they cried for bread, and cried in vain,
Shared his privations, and increased his pain.
Christmas had come and gone, but brought no cheer,
And heavy gloom obscured the dawning year:
Cramp'd in resources, corn at famine price,
Short is the step from misery to vice:
Necessity will make the timid bold,—
The poultry-yards had suffered, and the fold
Had lost its fatlings, stolen from the flock,
While the preserves were thinning of their stock:
Poachers those sacred precincts had assailed,
Great was their fear, but hunger still prevailed.
They fought the keepers once and left them bound,
Then, unmolested, ranged throughout the ground.
In every little path was set a snare,
To trap a passing rabbit or a hare;
The squire raved, the parson almost swore
To transport all the village of Stanmore.
Mervyn from all these projects kept aloof,
But in the web of destiny a woof

Was weaving now, that caught him in its toil,
And changed the peaceful tiller of the soil
To one of Nature's outcasts, wild and stern,
Hunted by men and hating in return.
As we before have said, his cottage stood
Near to the park, and bordered by a wood:
Rising one morning, ere the break of day,
Having no work, he went awhile to stray
Along the wood: his care-abstracted mind
Regarded not the little dog behind:
One of the keepers who was on the watch,
Hoping some trapper in the act to catch,
Followed him, unobserved, where'er he went,
Until he reach'd again his tenement.
Just as he near'd the cottage door, a sound
From his small garden made him quick turn round,
The half-starved cur had seized a noble hare
Feeding among the vegetables there.
Mervyn did not a moment hesitate
To seize a meal provided him by Fate:
Puss had been taken in the very act
Of larceny:—an undisputed fact—
In trespassing upon his garden store,
Where many visits had been paid before.

To make her pay the forfeit was but fair,
They ate his greens and he would eat the hare.
Unlucky act—he seized the tempting prize,
Unconscious that look'd on, two other eyes:
The keeper heard the shrill, peculiar cry
Poor puss emitted in her agony,
And saw him lift it up and take it in;
Then turning round, he mutter'd, with a grin,
" So then I've caught, at last, one fellow out,
I'll off to master, and to Parson Prout."—
The squire and parson both were of the peace,
Licensed to make small peccadilloes cease.
The former was a man extremely fit,
Hated reform, and swore by William Pitt:
He had a rental of a thousand pounds,
Kept a good house, besides a pack of hounds;
Hunted, and shot, and fished, in due rotation,
And call'd himself a pillar of the nation,
Took in the " Sporting Magazine," and read
A Tory weekly—just to hear what said
The ministers, and what they meant to do
To put down Jacobins, and freedom too.
He drank and smoked, abused the French, and swore
One Englishman was equal to a score;

Attended Quarter Sessions, kept a 'Burn,'
And served the post of Sheriff in his turn:
What would you more a man to qualify
And fit for irresponsibility?—
The vicar was of such another stamp,
At school a dunce, at college quite a scamp,
Had rowed and rode, played cricket, drank his wine,
Took his degree—and soon was—a divine.
They sent him down, soon after, to Stanmore,
To preach the Gospel, and instruct the poor,
And sure he was a pattern to his cloth—
That is, the scarlet—none could be more wroth
Against transgressors—in the poaching way;
And oft he threaten'd of the judgment-day.
The keeper soon his information laid
Before his master, who had some time pray'd
To have the chance to catch some fellow out,
Who quickly sent him down to Parson Prout.
A warrant was prepared with ready haste,
And ere poor Mervyn could his dinner taste,
The constable had got him in his care,
Together with the skin that wrapp'd the hare
Which they had found, they did not touch the rest,
But left it with the family, half dress'd.

Upon the bench "aloft, in awful state"
And gloom portentous, sat each magistrate.
The criminal was brought, so pale and thin;
The keeper then was order'd to begin;
Who thus commenced:—"Oh! if your worships
please,
As I was watching underneath the trees
This morning early, in your honours' wood,
I saw a man not far from where I stood
Prowling about, as if upon no good.
I thought he had no bus'ness there, and tried
To watch his movements from the coppice side.
He walk'd but slowly, spying here and there,
As if upon the look out for a snare;
But did not seem to find one, for he turn'd
With empty hands again, and then I learn'd
'Twas neighbour Mervyn thus so early out;
The chance was lost, I fancied, for this bout,
When I perceived him reach his garden gate,
And enter in, where he came out so late:
But scarcely had I turn'd myself around,
When from the garden came a well known sound,
And running to the hedge and looking through,
Which didn't take me very long to do,

I saw him holding in his hands a hare,
Which he took in while I was standing there,
And so I came and told your worships both;
And this is true, I'll take my Bible oath."
The parson took the deposition down,
Then ask'd the pris'ner, with a gloomy frown,
"If he had aught to answer in reply?"
The latter with a tear-bemoistened eye,
Began the simple history to tell
Of what occurred, and how it so befel.
"I didn't walk, your worships, in the wood
To look for hares, although we wanted food;
The keeper never saw me spy about
Like one in search of something in the route;
The hedgerows were the places for a snare,
I'm sure the keeper never saw me there,
Nor doing harm at all, that e'er I know,
But only walking quiet to and fro:
My dog, your honours, somehow caught this hare
In my own garden, ere I was aware.
And then I pick'd it up, and took it in—
I'm sure I thought to do so was no sin.
Your worships know I never have been brought
Until this hour before the bench for aught."

"Oh! no," replied the parson, "that may be,
Because the laws you've broken secretly;
I never knew a rogue who did a crime,
But always pleads its being the first time!"
"I am no rogue, your worship, but a man
Who strive to live as honest as I can;
I labour hard to find my children meat,
God knows 'tis little we have had to eat;
No flesh hath pass'd our lips and little flour
Since harvest downward to the present hour,
But for potatoes, and our garden store,
We must have starved, or had relief before;
And sure, your honours, if hares eat my greens,
They lessen by that act my slender means;
To take a thief I cannot think amiss,
When I can catch him in the act, like this:
I'm sure your worships will not think it hard
A poor man should his little produce guard."
"Oh! very fine—you tell a pretty tale,
A proper doctrine this for Stanmore Vale!
And so you have the impudence to say
You kill our game, and think it but fair play?
But, fellow, we will teach you to beware
How thus again you meddle with a hare.

I have no doubt that you were one of these
Who beat and tied our keepers to the trees,
And stole the sheep, or glean'd the poultry yard,
Because you thought, it seems, the times were hard;
A likely one, indeed, for such a feat,
Rather than live so long and taste no meat!"
"Surely your worships cannot mean to state
I ever did what you insinuate?
To take a poor man's character away
Without a single proof of what you say—
Is harsh and cruel—when I've never been
Of theft accused, nor yet with poachers seen."
"Perhaps you've not been caught before this time,
But we have proof at least, of present crime,
And shall not spare to lay upon your head
A punishment shall make your fellows dread;
You've been convicted of a breach of law,
By evidence complete, without a flaw,
Which you have not denied; nay more, in fact
You have confess'd—and by a recent Act,
The 80th chapter, 13 George the Third,
The penalties thereto attached, incurred,

Which says, if any in the night shall dare
With dog, or net, or gun, to kill a hare,
Between the hours of seven, and six, A.M.,
A magistrate may lawfully condemn
To pay a fine of twenty pounds, and we
Inflict upon you the full penalty;
And if you make default, or goods should fail,
Three months' confinement in the common jail."
Poor Mervyn stood a moment stupified,
Then to the bench imploringly he cried,
"Oh, God! your worships, pardon me this time,
I've not been guilty of a heinous crime;
Oh! spare me for my wife and children's sake;
What will become of them, if me you take?
Ten shillings in the world we haven't got,
Nor five pounds' worth about our little cot.
Surely, you will not, for a worthless hare,
Inflict this wrong, and drive us to despair?
Condemn my wretched family to grief,
And force them to the parish for relief?"
"That should have flash'd across your mind
before,
If you would keep them from the workhouse
door;

Think not to move our pity for release,
The law forbids—for how would poaching cease?
We are resolved to put it down by force,
Justice uncurbed, must therefore take its course."
Such was the fiat of the land's stern lords,
"The law allows it and the judge awards."
For form, a warrant issued to distrain,
But with a 'nulla bona,' came again;
A mittimus, the victim then consign'd
To be with felons, in the jail confined.
Who can portray his desolated hearth?
(Quench'd is its light, and vanish'd is its mirth,)
The sinking heart, the sob of agony,
As clung the children round the mother's knee
Wondering, with artless looks, to see her weep,
And what their sire so long away should keep:
While one was standing maundering alone,
And making o'er the dog a piteous moan,
His little playmate—now all stiff and stark
Whose merry gambols and whose joyous bark
Had often fill'd the childish heart with glee,
Now by the stern oppressors' harsh decree,
Lay there, extended lifeless on the ground,
Mangled with many a bruise and bleeding wound:

The tyrants' ruthless orders thus repay
With death, his instinct to attack his prey.
But leaving this, we hurry on the road,
To follow Mervyn to his new abode,
The jail of Exeter, where in a den
Stock'd not with wolves and bears, but wilder men,
He found himself turn'd loose; condemn'd to herd
With felons fierce in deed and foul in word,
Where blasphemy, loud oaths, and ribald jeers,
Falls withering upon the outraged ears,
And like the deadly upas tree, the blight
Communicates around a hideous night
Of moral death; whose pestilent effects
Is seen in all society's sad wrecks.
There was the callous wretch, in crime grown grey,
The novice here, the child of yesterday;
The robber, smuggler, housebreaker, and *He*,
Whose greatest crime perhaps was poverty;
Men of each grade, degree, and age in vice,
Whom passions madden, or whom lusts entice,
Huddled together, or dispersed about
In banded gangs, the dreary place throughout.
This is a training for the young in crime—
As if to leave no chance of losing time,

The fledgling knave who tremblingly begins
His juvenile attempts at little sins,
By stealing apples in a petty way
At home—is sent without the least delay
To learn his trade with masters of the art,
Who willingly their lessons do impart:
Hoary professors, miscreants of skill,
Who train him up to rob, perhaps to kill;
A little rogue is found, on coming back,
Few requisites of greater ones to lack.
In company like this, to pass away
The tedious hours of each succeeding day
And hear each harden'd villain boastingly
Speak of his crimes against society;
What feats and tricks had mark'd his vile career,
Now destitute, and then o'ercharged with gear;
Their wild adventures, told with careless glee,
Their drinking bouts, and noisy revelry,
Poaching exploits, and plundering excursions,
Of which they gave exaggerated versions,
Yet not unmark'd with drollery, would cause
Approving laughter, wonder, and applause.
With mouth extended, and admiring eyes,
The young ones swallow'd down the monstrous lies,

And longed to take the field, — to try their skill,—
And signalize themselves in doing ill.
Mervyn would listen with a vague distrust,
To what at first created great disgust,
But then another's humorous detail
Of knavish cunning, which could scarcely fail
To strike his fancy, and excite a laugh—
(Beside the language commonly call'd "chaff"
Disguised the naked aspect of the crime)—
Until, by slow degrees, he came in time
To hear without distaste, some wretch impart
Schemes of revenge, would once have made him start;
The thickness of a smoky atmosphere,
Will scarce at first permit one to see clear
Or breathe in freedom—but continued stay,
Purges the dimness of our visual ray,
And makes the heaving chest a tone assume
Adapted to the grossness of the room.
Can it be wonder'd such a man as he
Should be infected by his company?
What training hath a British peasant got,
To furnish a sufficient antidote?

Not education and refinement high,
Loftier thoughts and feeling to supply!
Such things as to a cultivated mind,
By wit ennobled, and by thought refined
Would cause disgust—to men of coarser mould,
Before whose eyes fair science ne'er unroll'd
Her elevating stores, to kindle forth
Sense of ideal grace, and polish'd worth,
Will pass unmark'd—or otherwise produce
Pleasure proportion'd to their pungent use.
Among the inmates of the jail, was one
Whom Mervyn in his early life had known—
A man superior to the common herd,
Who had some petty penalty incurr'd
For practising upon the revenue:
In fact, he was connected with a crew
Of daring smugglers, and had been engaged
In all the contests which the latter waged
Against the customs! Politic and bold,
Careless of danger, so he won but gold,
Ready of hand, and skilful to contrive,
His cautious courage made his projects thrive.
A little accident had brought him there,
Which still occurr'd, in spite of all his care,

But yet so slight the proof against him brought,
A short imprisonment was all he got.
With him our peasant soon was intimate,
They talk'd of pleasures of a by-gone date,
Fought all their childhood's battles o'er, and play'd,
In words, once more beneath the yew trees' shade,
Nor was the present circumstance forgot,
The mutual hardships of each other's lot:
The smuggler was a man whom sense of wrong
Fresh from his spirit, burnt upon his tongue,
Whether himself or others were oppressed,
Resentful feelings glow'd within his breast;
He hated tyranny in men or laws—
Either, to him, was a sufficient cause
For opposition fierce; and first had made
A convert of him to his dang'rous trade.
His ardent spirit knew no other way
Than to refuse the system to obey.
He heard poor Mervyn's simple tale, and swore
Hatred more bitter than he felt before,
Denounced all laws proceeding from a class
Meant to oppress and trample on the mass:

No principle had made, that ere he knew,
In heav'n or earth, the many for the few:
"'Tis usurpation all," he fiercely cried;
"Why should we bend before these sons of pride?
Can the possession of some roods of clay
Impart a greater share of wisdom's ray?
And give a right to trample on the poor,
Because they hold some feet of earth the more?
Is it not monstrous such a man as you
Should be imprisoned, if your tale be true—
Torn from your home and all you hold most dear,
At this inclement season of the year—
For what?—Some flagrant outrage on the time—
Theft, murder, arson, or such heinous crime,
Something revolting to our sense of right,
Shocking to reason, horrible to sight?
No! but the killing of a paltry hare,
Taken by chance, before you were aware!
In your own garden, too, where if the plea
The rich set up,—the rights of property,
Were worth a shadow of the least respect,
Why do they make it thus of none effect?
Is it because the poor man's little all
Is disregarded so for being small?

Why, they should know that that to him is dear,
As if he had ten thousand pounds a-year,
And should be so respected; for the gains
The wealthy make, take half, and what remains
Will still give surplus, but the meagre store
Allotted to the labours of the poor
Is bare of superfluities at best—
Tax that one-half, and what is then the rest?
A wretched pittance, less than they afford
To feed the dogs beneath the rich man's board!
But thus they act—the self-elected crew,
They sacrifice the many to the few:
Make laws to shield themselves, and when they find
Their usurpations irritate the mind
Of their poor bond-slaves, stung beyond control,
To utter forth the anguish of the soul,
And rouse them up against this tyranny,
Loud rings the watch-word of conspiracy,
Treason, rebellion, mutiny, they cry,
And all the laws artillery let fly
On their devoted heads—nor do they spare
To loose their bloodhounds should the people dare

Their power to withstand: who couch the lance
And havoc cry, as fiercely they advance
And overwhelm with ruin young and old,
The weak, the strong, the timid, and the bold.
'Tis folly, blind, presumptuous, and rash,
Making their acts with nature's laws to clash,
Thwarting the sure result of Providence
Blessings on nations freely to dispense,
That generates those men of daring mould,
Who, stimulated by the lust of gold,
Help to frustrate and paralyse those rules
Pass'd by the purblind race of titled fools.
Smugglers as surely from bad statesmen rise
As by corruption maggots spring from flies.
The great Creator's wisdom formed the earth,
As if to guard against a general dearth,
So varied in its climates, seasons, soils,
That man was sure to gather by his toils,
If part should fail, enough to serve the whole,
Were he but under common-sense control.
In districts where the sun's diffusive ray
Sheds its effulgent radiance through the day,
And pours a scorching heat on all below,
Spices and tropic fruits, luxuriant, grow:

And where with milder influence he reigns,
Casting a genial warmth upon the plains,
The generous olive yields his ample store,
And floods of wine the teeming vineyards pour,
And corn, and oil, and fruits, an ample choice,
Causes her grateful children to rejoice.
The colder climates of the west and north
Are rich in products of undoubted worth,
There waves the golden grain throughout the fields,
And bread to cheer man's drooping spirit yields;
The verdant pastures flocks and herds supply,
And animate the landscape to his eye.
In parts the force of human skill and care
Deficiencies supply of nature there;
The cold and chilling air, the barren soil
Are compensated by increase of toil.
And often where above is blasted heath,
Lie countless treasures buried underneath;
The surface is unpromising, but know,
Coal, metals, fossils, may be found below.
These by the manufacturers supplied,
Purchase such gifts as nature hath denied.
It would appear that Heaven had design'd
An intercourse, from this, among mankind.

The rich productions of the glowing East,
Spices and perfumes,—all excess at least,
Should be exchanged with what from other lands
Might be obtained in barter at their hands.
One state produces silk, another gold;
A third the stores of enterprise unfold,
By skilful arts produced—and wine and oil
A fourth produces from its teeming soil,
Corn in abundance in a fifth is found;
Flax, timber, cotton, hemp, elsewhere abound;
Each hath a surplus of some given ware,
But lacks a thing a neighbour well could spare;
What is the course, then, common-sense points out?
A general exchange, beyond all doubt!—
This object to promote, what Government
Hath its enlighten'd, strong assistance lent?
How have the ruling powers of each state
Further'd what seems the wise designs of Fate?
Why, heavy imposts intercept the store
That would flow in from every distant shore:
A fierce array of Custom-house police,
Cruisers, and coastguards, suicidal fleece

The willing trader, and promote the plan,
By giving all the trouble that they can.
Ah! wretched policy, perversely blind,
How long with folly will ye vex mankind?—
Alas! 'tis but a link in that sad chain
With which our vices visit us again!
It is with nations as with units found,
The consequence of crime our steps surround,
And later ills with which the both are curst,
Flow in a stream from one false step at first.
War! sinful war! on some absurd pretence,
Hath plunged a people into great expense,
Wasted their strength, exhausted all the store
That industry and peace laid up before—
Their native land with tears and blood is wet,
For which they get a heritage of debt.
Nor is this all—Medusa-like, each drop
Of dripping gore springs up into a crop
Of serpents, baneful to the common weal,
Whose poison-bite want years of peace to heal.
The reckless outlay and the interest due,
Must needs demand increasing revenue:
New taxes are laid on, and some advanced,—
The costs of necessaries are enhanced—

To save themselves, the powerful combine,
Taxation thus assumes a crooked line:
What can be done, the rich refuse to pay?
Oh! tax the imports, heavy duties lay
Upon the foreign merchant, that will be
Fixing our quarters on the enemy.
As if the duty on some foreign thing
Were paid by him who doth it hither bring!
'Tis true he seems the money to disburse,—
But to return with interest to his purse:
Either 'tis so, the country where 'tis brought
Repays the tax, in reason as they ought,
Or else they are debarred, if fixed too high,
From what they need, and robb'd of a supply.
But no! a people thus they can't deprive,
'Tis but a boon to make the smuggler thrive.
Each heavy impost levied on a ware,
Holds out a premium to those men who dare
Incur a risk, which danger well rewards,
Where wants invite, and only folly guards.
This is a fact on which you may rely,
Smuggling will never cease with duties high—
Invest your borders with a cordon round,
Let functionaries hold each 'vantage-ground,

Guard every inlet with a jealous care,
While navies watch the rover to ensnare—
Let but a nation want, nor grudge to pay,
Rulers will find "the will hath found a way,"
And spite of armies—penalties and pains,
All overborne by hope of greater gains.
'Tis well decreed that Nature will not yield
And flee inglorious from the battle-field,
Without a struggle to maintain her right,
And though in fetters, shows her latent might.
Defeated here, chain'd, bound, and thwarted there,
She still eludes and baffles every snare.
The blooming maid, with charms unquestion'd graced,
A lovely figure and a slender waist,
Yet, not content, must needs compress it more,
And make still smaller what was slight before.
This may be done, and stays pernicious cramp,
The graceful outline bearing Beauty's stamp,
Yet outraged Nature vindicates her law,
And makes beneath a greater bulk to grow.
The Indian savage in his wilderness,
The infant head may flatten and compress,

Make it recede before, yet still will find
A shapeless mass extending from behind;
Prevented growing where it ought to be,
It then becomes a mark'd deformity.
'Tis thus it happens on a larger scale,
Where injudicious obstacles prevail
Against the trade of nations: which debarr'd
Its proper outlet—Nature's impulse marr'd—
Seeks other channels, ay, and finds them too,
In spite of all that tyranny can do.
Is *legal* trade forbidden by command?
Then people will pursue the *Contraband!*
And nought will put it down, until you lay
That course aside that makes evasion pay:
Take off restrictive duties—commerce free,
Will soon drive smuggling to a bankruptcy.
As to the sin of thus evading laws,
Is not th' effect less wicked than the cause?
Those who the wholesale mischief perpetrate
Between one country and its neighbour state,
To make each look with jealousy upon
Whate'er success attends the other one,
(As if the best of customers should be
Those most akin to meagre poverty,)

Sowing dissension, rivalry, and hate,
Where they should mutual friendship cultivate;
And by their laws block up that ready source
Of common good that must result of course,
Were each permitted freely to exchange
What with themselves they jointly would arrange—
As much in magnitude of sin excel,
As He who from the highest glory fell,
The arch-apostate Lucifer, and drew
A third of Heaven to perdition, too,
Exceeded, in ingratitude and wrong,
The meanest seraph of that guilty throng.
Indeed, the smuggler may be said to stand
Much like Abdiel in the rebel band,
Prepared to battle in the adverse cause,
And trample under foot their wicked laws;
It only wants to earn the latter's name,
Their motive to oppose should be the same.
Alas! in this hard world it doth befal
The great rogue sits in judgment on the small;
And lookers-on admire the mighty knave,
Who sends not one but thousands to the grave.
Too true the saying, 'greater rogues run loose,
But petty thieves must dangle at the noose;'

One death is *murder* (mercy stands at zero),
But slaughtered millions constitute a *hero*.
Well! well! the time will come when this hath
past,
And truth and justice shall prevail at last!"

Thus would the smuggler vent his indignation
As often as they held a conversation,
And urge on Mervyn the expediency,
Of joining him when both again were free.
He offered him a portion of his gains,
And in persuasion took no little pains.
Although his wrongs inflamed his mind with rage,
Mervyn would not determine to engage.
But when his friend, at length, was set at large,
Which was some time before his own discharge,
They settled where to meet, if he should be
Inclined to join the other's company.
His own imprisonment, at length, expired,
And liberty, so ardently desired,
Is his once more—turn'd out to find his way
Back to his home unaided as he may.
April was far advanced, and genial showers
Had deck'd the hedgerows with the early flowers;

The fields were clad with verdure—on each spray
The rain-drops glisten'd in the sun's soft ray;
The little birds pour'd forth their joyous notes
In warbling music from a thousand throats,
And often from some little wooded dell
Came forth the cuckoo's voice of spring to tell.
Sweet harbinger of brighter days to come,
Fair gentle stranger from a distant home,
How doth thy cheering song our spirits thrill
When first we hear thee from some neighbour hill;
A gush of joyful, fond emotions rise,
With thoughts of verdant fields and sunny skies;
The fragrant odours of the balmy south
Play lightly round, as wafted from thy mouth,
We drink the breath of summer, and thy voice
Sounds like the turtle, bidding us rejoice.
'Tis hope embodied, singing in our ears,
Away with timid doubts and anxious fears;
Winter is gone—his dreary reign is past
The piercing sleet-storm and the ruffling blast;
The moaning trees, whose bare arms waved on high,
As swept the winds of March in thunder by,
Will soon be clad—in spring's gay mantle drest,
And sigh responsive to the gentle west;

Unnumber'd flowers shall adorn the ground,
And deck the lately barren landscape round;
The fruit trees bloom delicious pink and white,
So exquisite, shall charm the longing sight,
And breathe a perfume sweet, and tell a tale
Of rich abundance crowning hill and dale.
To one who had for three months been immured
In prison walls, the contrast now endured
Was rapture to the senses: Mervyn moved,
With vigour on, to reach the home he loved;
But, faint and hungry, at the close of day,
It still was many tedious miles away.
He begged a supper at a farmer's door,
And flung his weary limbs, where oft before
The poor have slept—beside a rick of hay,
He slumber'd soundly till the dawn of day;
Then rose refresh'd, and once again set out,
With sturdy pace, upon his homeward route.
He reach'd that home at last, or what *had* been;
But here he found an unexpected scene,
Another in possession of his cot,
And what had once been his, a stranger got.
His anxious questions soon were satisfied,
By what the present tenant's wife replied:

From her he learnt, that at the quarter-day,
His wife, unable all the rent to pay,
Had been distrained on, and in fact expell'd
By violence, from the tenement they held—
Herself and helpless children turn'd to roam,
And find elsewhere a shelter and a home.
Houseless and wretched, destitute and poor,
They went for refuge to the workhouse door,
But could not be received: a slender aid
The overseer had for the present paid,
And promised more. That night they shelter got,
To hide their heads in some poor neighbour's cot,
Who took compassion on their friendless state,
And thus preserved them from the outcast's fate.
A wretched hovel, on a barren moor,
Roofless in part, and destitute of door
Or window, to exclude the chilly air,
Was open to them now in their despair.
Some poor but feeling neighbours lent their aid
To patch the roof, construct a door, and laid
Their heads and hands together, just to form
A present shelter from the howling storm.
This they contrived at last, and by their care,
Aided by what their poverty could spare,

They make the cabin serve: one gave a crock,
And others something from their slender stock,
To misery more wretched than their own:
Straw for a bed, on which some rags were thrown;
A stool or two, and table, with some peat,
As fuel to supply the needful heat.
Their harsh expulsion—where they now remain—
Was all that Mervyn stayed to ascertain;
But as he turn'd away, a cry of rage
Against the men who could such warfare wage,
Burst from his lips; he breathed a bitter curse,
And swore in thought to pay it back with worse;
Then strode along to reach the ruin'd cot,
For well he knew the lone and dreary spot.
It long had been untenanted, because
Some frenzied wretch, regardless of the laws
Of nature or of man, in passion's mood,
Had spilt the sacred fount of human blood,
Burst with unhallow'd hands the bonds of life,
And slew, in jealous rage, his wretched wife.
Alas! in struggling, ere the deed was done,
He gave a death-wound to his only son.
This double murder, with its lonely station,
Soon gave the place an evil reputation.

They said 'twas haunted—through the country round
No tenants, even rent-free, could be found,
And so it fell to premature decay,—
Without another inmate till the day
That Mervyn's wife and children harbour'd there,
And drove the ghosts to suit themselves elsewhere.
An hour's walk brought Mervyn to the spot,
And there, before the doorway of the cot,
Two of his little children were at play,
Romping bare-headed in the genial day.
He stood awhile, with dim and tearful eyes,
To watch their sport, and hear their childish cries;
But soon they saw him—first, with some amaze,
An anxious look, and then a keener gaze
Relieved their fears, and with the joyful sound,
"'Tis father come," together on they bound,
And rush into his arms, and clasp him round.
The eldest girl, employ'd on work within,
Aroused and startled by the sudden din,
Came rushing forth, and with a beaming face,
Shared in the fervour of his warm embrace:
Then shouting, laughing loud, the joyous four
Soon reached and stood within the cottage door.

A rapid look for some one else he cast,
But none were there save those who held him fast.
"Mother is gone to work," the daughter cries,
Replying to the language of his eyes;
For now of late to eke their scanty pay,
She had gone out to labour through the day.
A shade of disappointment crossed his brow,
To find his partner should be absent now;
He long'd to see her, for he loved his wife,
And peaceable had been their wedded life,
No bickerings, nor mutual complaint
Had stirred them up to angry discontent;
And from their marriage, now ten years, or more,
They had been never parted thus before.
Fatigued, he sat him down, at length, to rest,
And begged that something might be brought or drest,
For hunger, unappeased, with gnawing tooth,
Was strong within, which kisses scarce could soothe.
The cottage larder little store supplies,
To cheer his frame, or glad his longing eyes;
No meat nor bread was there, but at his wish
Some nice potatoes steam'd upon a dish.

The proverb says, " Keen appetites require
No sauce or pickle to provoke desire :"
And Mervyn found his hunger well supplied,
Whate'er was wanting to his meal beside.
The fare, though mean and poor, renew'd his strength,
Which resting aided, and he rose at length
To look about more closely through the cot;
Outside and in and round he view'd the spot,
And soon began with vigour to set right
Whate'er appear'd obnoxious to the sight.
Before misfortune fell upon his head,
His house and garden, as it has been said,
Were famed for neatness and some show of taste;
But here was wretchedness, decay, and waste:
Yet something might be done, if set about,
To give the place a better look without,
And make it tight within.—He first began,
In order to proceed upon a plan,
To clear around the door, and move away
Such stones and rubble as before it lay.
He levell'd o'er the ground, fill'd up each pit,
And placed loose stones in crannies where they fit,

Along the ruin'd wall—by eventide
Many obstructions had been put aside:
And then came home his wife—she caught his sight
While at a distance, through the fading light,
And went to meet her, as with quicken'd pace
She hasten'd on to meet his kind embrace.
"Oh! John," she cried, "and are you come at last;
Thank God for that." And while he held her fast
And kiss'd her cheek, a flood of joyful tears
Proclaim'd her present joy and recent fears.
That night they sat within their humble cot,
Discoursing of their past and present lot:
Of all that had befallen since the day
That tore them from each other's arms away;
The wife hung trembling on his words intent,
While he described his long imprisonment;
The horrors of the jail, the bitter cold,
The gloom, the shocking oaths—all, all were told;
And he in turn the history required
Of all that in his absence had transpired:
She spoke of keen privations, want, and grief,
Hard struggles to live on without relief;
First one thing sold, and then another went,
Such as they best could spare, for nourishment,

And that of coarest kind—beside some fish,
Milk and potatoes were their only dish;
But that they could have borne—for 'tis, alas!
No novelty, howe'er it comes to pass,
That those who work the hardest to produce,
In this fair world, the things of common use—
Corn, fruit, warm dwellings, clothing, wine, and oil,
Get little of the products for their toil.
They sow but do not reap, and labour hard
To live, from every luxury debarr'd:
The skilful weaver, whose ingenious art
With cloth of gold and silver crowds the mart,
And robes the monarch in his shining vest,
Is either clad in rags, or meanly dress'd:
The cunning craftsman, by whose well-taught hand
Fair palaces arise throughout the land,
Where does he dwell?—In some high garrets round,
Or in a cellar, buried under ground.
But to return—She said they struggled on
Till many things about the house were gone,
Then came the stunning blow, the last event,
The landlord's seizure of the rest for rent,

And subsequent expulsion—some declared
The act illegal, which should not be spared;
"But what could I, a poor lone woman, do
Against the landlord and his riches, too?"
The wife and children's sufferings impart
A keen resentment to the husband's heart:
"Curse on their wolfish, savage acts," he cried;
"They want to crush me quite, and rough-shod ride
On me and mine. They first inflict a wrong,
Send me to jail throughout the winter long,
Without a spark of reason or of sense
To justify or urge in its defence,
Save their own self-made laws—and then expel
My wife and children from their home as well,
Because we do not pay that very rent
Which they, by locking me up, did prevent.
And now, no doubt, they'll carry on the war,
And do again what they have done before:
Keep me, perhaps, from work, or set a watch,
But I'll take care this time to be a match:
I'll seize on all that comes within my way,
Of hare or rabbit—night shall be my day!
I'll join Tom Shepherd, for he wants a hand
To help his kegs and smuggled goods to land."

"Oh, John! there's risk in that," replies the wife;
"Don't put in hazard liberty and life."
"Nay, never fear, I warrant I'll take heed—
You know how they have served me for a deed
Of common right; they cannot use me worse
If I do something to amend my purse.
When I was quiet, doing no one wrong,
They sent me off to jail for three months long,
And now I'll trample down their tyrant laws,
They shan't do so again without some cause.
Why, Shepherd told me, all along this shore
He could collect his helpers by the score;
Some keep a look-out station on the coast,
To watch the vessel—each one has his post,
And when they find a chance to make a "run,"
They gather at a signal, and 'tis done.
Why, Farmer Lang, and Farmer Stevens, too,
Have been for years connected with the crew,
And Harry Wood, and Lavis, and Ned Strong,
With many others, to his side belong,
Who join whenever wanted: and you know
That often when with us the times were low,
They had got money, though they never wrought
One half as hard as I, who yet had nought.

To hear those fellows in the gaol declare
Their thieving, knavish tricks would make you stare.
I do not want to rob, and wont begin
To follow them, but yet I think no sin
To make good brandy cheap, or silken gear,
Instead of using what is bad and dear.
Why, Shepherd told me, where tobacco grows,
Some foreign place, but what 'tis call'd Lord knows!
They'll run what risks by sea and land abound,
And send it here for just a groat a pound;
But we don't get it thus, they make us pay
Six times as much for duty, which they lay
Upon our heads, and, by this imposition,
Invite the smuggler to a competition,
'Tis quite a premium given to the bold,
That honest traders may be undersold."—
The next day Mervyn spent at home, and put
His time to add some comforts to the hut,
And then set out to seek the rendezvous
Where he might hear about the Rover's crew.
The place appointed was a neighbour town,
A little inn, some narrow alley down,

Joining the quay, a dark, unwholesome place,
Where Cleanliness durst never show her face:
Disease sat brooding with portentous wing,
And from her baleful pinions horrid spring
Want, misery, and crime. Fevers abound,
Bred by the reeking odours from the ground,
Which pestilential rise, opaque and dense,
In steams disgusting to the sicken'd sense.
Fumes of tobacco through the open door,
With smells which porter, ale, and spirits pour
In blended vapour, need no other mark
To find the alehouse even in the dark.
Mervyn inquired of a portly man,
Whose bloated look claim'd kindred with the can,
And bore the sign of landlord in his face,
(A look of cunning, with a ruby grace,)
If Captain Shepherd had been lately there?
He heard the question with a careless air,
The leer that look'd out from his twinkling eyes
Bespoke him one not taken by surprise:
His answer was evasive, seeming meant
To hide a query, as to what intent
He came to ask: it might be Yes or No;
According as the questioner might show

Some other token: which was soon supplied
By Mervyn spreading out his fingers wide
And lifting up his hand to stroke his chin,
To which the other signall'd by a grin:
This telegraphing seem'd to satisfy
The host that he might safely now reply,
Without disguise: and when the question next
Was put to him, together with the text,
'And wine to cheer man's heart,' he soon replied,
"Yes, he is here, and even now inside."
He then was introduced where many men
Were sitting drinking in a gloomy den
Within the bar, which, though 'twas open day,
Derived no profit from the solar ray:
Candles were burning dimly in the smoke
Of vile tobacco, which in eddies broke
From many pipes; his friend was sitting there,
Who now received him with a kindly air,
Shook his hand warmly, while with manners bluff,
He bade him welcome, though in accents rough;
With pipe in hand and with a chirping glass,
They let the fleeting hours unnoticed pass,
Talk'd of their prison-scenes, its jokes and fare,
But both agreed 'twas far more pleasant there.

Then Mervyn told how hard he had been used,
His wife and children shamefully abused,
Turn'd out of doors without a place to lie,
Like wild beasts driven forth to live or die.
This had aroused him, and inflamed his mind
Against the laws which thus were made to grind
The faces of the poor:—and so he came
To war with them beneath a smuggler's name,
If they would take him—good—he'd serve them
well,
And give his aid to signal, watch, or sell.
The captain freely, when his tale he heard,
Agreed at once to keep his former word,
And join him to the band: then turning round,
He knock'd the table thrice, and at the sound
Dead silence was obtain'd: he rose and said,
"Comrades, a friend of mine has just been led,
From some events, to wish to join our band,
And place himself beneath our just command;
I pledge my word for him, do you agree
To give him entrance to the company."
Loud cries of "Yes! if you are pleased—all
right!"
"Well," says the captain, "then I move, to-night

He takes the oaths, and be allowed to hold
A share with us, in danger and in gold,
"We'll christen him in punch, and make him free,
A volunteer of this society."
This speech produced a tempest of applause,
The promised punch, no doubt, the moving cause;
A smoking bowl soon steam'd upon the board,
From which a glass for each was quickly pour'd,
Then standing up, they form'd a circle round,
The while the Neophyte was strongly bound
(Uplifting in his hand a keen-edged knife)
By solemn oath to hazard limb and life
In their behalf, and secret counsel keep
Of them and theirs, on land and on the deep:
This done, each lifted up the flowing glass,
And round the mutual pledge, in bumpers, pass,
Then all sat down, and mirth and revelry
Reign'd till the midnight hour, with thoughtless glee.

The third day, Mervyn once more took the road
That led from thence towards his own abode,
They had arranged the conduct to pursue
To lull suspicion, yet be useful, too,

Establish'd signs and signals, and thus made
His help effective to promote their trade.
The distance of all dwellings from his home,
Its isolation gave him scope to roam
And go and come unmark'd, perhaps afford
At times for portions of their smuggled hoard
A safe deposit, and a snug retreat
From whence to spread it over all that beat.
A little farmer, who for years had been
A sort of agent, was to serve as screen,
And nominally to provide him work,
Behind which guard he might in safety lurk,
And follow up without so much suspicion
The real purpose of his secret mission;
The farmer's work would answer for a blind,
Just to conceal the goings on behind.
Mervyn had been provided by his friend
With a supply, his shatter'd house to mend,
And purchase things for necessary use,
Until his own work would some cash produce:
Two pounds were thus most generously given,
So that he wasn't for the present driven
To much distress, but might in little space
His furniture and tools and clothes replace.

He first commenced the needful reparation,
To render more secure his habitation;
Mended the roof with thatch, repair'd the door,
And made it snugger than it was before;
And while to save appearances, he went
To weekly work, yet many days he spent
From time to time at home, to rectify
What was amiss to comfort, or the eye.
From out the open space his cottage round,
He took a little spot for garden ground;
This he enclosed, and compass'd it about
With a neat hedge, to keep the cattle out;
For in the summer, even on the moor
They find a sweet nor insufficient store:
Beneath his sturdy strokes, the stubborn soil
Was broken up—what will not yield to toil?
And soon within its precincts might be seen
The hardy cabbage, and the winter green;
Another year, potatoes too were set,
Leeks, carrots, parsley, daisies, mignonette,
And much besides—for here his wife could aid
And little children wield the hoe and spade.
But this was done at times, for on the coast,
He often was required at his post,

And many nights, and sometimes days, were spent
Away from home, when matters would prevent
The ready landing at the wish'd-for hour,
And cross excisemen with malicious power
Would balk their run, and make them scud away
Over the waters to another bay.
Barring a little danger, and some risk,
With Mervyn things went well, and times were brisk;
He had more money now, than when before
He toil'd from day to dark, yet still was poor.
But somehow he with gold, did not possess
A greater stock of real happiness:
When in his former cottage, trim and neat,
The garden with its flowers smelling sweet,
The bees and useful herbs—although he knew
And felt at periods keen privations, too—
Had brought him more of genuine content
Than now proceeded from the more he spent.
Since that sad time when first misfortune loured
And changed his life—his temper had been soured,
The milk of human kindness had been spilt,
By suffering the punishment of guilt:

He felt degraded, and the prison blot
Had cauterized his soul, and left a spot.
His mind was restless too, and often vex'd
With cares, that ne'er his former days perplex'd.
'Twas but a skulking, shirking life, he led,
To work at hours he used to be in bed,
And lie about by day, and wait, and watch,
A customer upon the sly to catch;
For often now he was employed as well
In landing first, as afterwards to sell;
Fulfilling orders, and obtaining more,
And goods deliv'ring at the buyer's door;
This would involve some risk, and he must lurk,
To ply in safety his forbidden work;
And all this great anxiety and care
Made him remember he had need beware.
Thus in much hazard, though in certain pay,
Some eighteen months had slowly pass'd away,
And hitherto, by fortune and good heed,
Arrangement and precaution, did succeed
In keeping him unscathed, yet he had past
Through many trying scenes from first to last.
Some hares and rabbits captured by his hands,
And other game from off the manor lands,

Were frequent on his board, for so he made
A current credit in the way of trade,
Against his former debit, so much paid
To cash account, when he in jail was laid.
He took it out in kind, and did not fail
To make his cunning for his head go bail;
The lesser danger merged, and seem'd but small
Compared with what from smuggling might befal
A year and half had pass'd, as hath been sung,
The days were getting short, and nights were long,
'Twas dreary dark November, fogs and rain
Obscured the land, and wrapp'd the restless main.
A run was to be made, and horse and man,
Obedient to the signal, soon began
To make towards the place of rendezvous,
To take the goods when landed by the crew.
Some distance from the land a lugger lay,
Just at the entrance of a narrow bay,
Where at right angles to the rugged shore,
A lonely valley, desolate and poor,
Garnish'd with mighty rocks, whose rugged forms
Had stood the buffets of a thousand storms,
Open'd a passage inward to the land,
And rose abruptly from the sounding strand.

The day had closed in gloom, and mournfully
The hollow blast blew fitful from the sea;
It moan'd and whistled with a dismal sound,
As swept the gust along the broken ground;
The night was pitchy dark, save when a streak
Of feeble light would through the blackness break
And show where riding high the moon enshrouds
Her silver face behind the murky clouds;
'Twas such a night as none would choose to roam
Who might retain the shelter of a home:
The lonely traveller as he hurried by
Thought of his distant cot, and heaved a sigh,
Then drew his garments closer round his chest
And onward with redoubled vigour press'd.
Yet crime was then abroad—the cloak of night
Best suited deeds that fitted not the light;
The murderer could make his victim bleed,
For few were out to interrupt the deed;
The death-cry sounding to the hearer's mind
Would seem the shrieking of the hollow wind;
The trembling felon who with stealthy pace
Shrouding from view his pale and sullen face,
Seeks in the farm-yard or the open field,
Such prey as either may with safety yield,

Pursues unchallenged underneath the mask
Of horrid gloom, his despicable task.
Others beside, whose crimes are not so deep,
(Oh, there are such would make an angel weep !)
Are now abroad—the poacher with his net
To drive the field, or hidden snare to set,
To earn, at cost of sleep, and toil, and pain,
Deep punishment for most uncertain gain.
The wild contemners of their country's laws
(Alas, that Britain e'er should give them cause)
Hailed such a chance as this to land their prize,
They hoped secure from any prying eyes;
Forward and back, an oft-repeated trip,
The boat had pass'd between the shore and ship,
The ample cargo soon was on the beach,
Fondly they trusted, now beyond the reach
Of custom-house inspectors—every hand
Then join'd to move it inward from the strand,
The kegs were slung across the horses' back,
Then altogether up the narrow track
They slowly toil, each driver as he went,
Beneath a load upon his shoulders bent;
Silent advancing, thus in single file,
They left the shore behind at least a mile,

And now were winding through a rugged pass
Rocky and dark, o'ershadowed by a mass
Of forest trees—a palpable obscure
As deep as Egypt did of old endure.
The horses, sure of foot, were making way
In passing safety, though with some delay;
Not so the drivers—who beneath their load
Stumbled or fell, and cursed the crooked road.
A single hail from some one in the rear,
An answering shout from a companion near,
Would now and then arise—the howling gale
Permitted not these cries to tell a tale
Obnoxious to their safety, but dispersed
The sound of broken words that from them burst,
And bore along upon its rustling wings,
A mingled tumult of imaginings.
They reach'd at length a huge colossal rock,
Whose giant sides upheaved—the mighty shock
Of elemental strife, had ages borne,
And mock'd its bootless rage with quiet scorn—
The Pixie's Torr, renown'd throughout the west,
The usual stock of legends wild possess'd:
The Druids, on its bald and lofty head,
Had, many ages since, tradition said,

Kindled the sacred fire—with pious awe
The multitude had worshipp'd from below,
Bent to their dreadful gods, and humbly sued
By human gore to purchase human good.
A noble temple—were the worship pure—
And one which will to latest time endure;
The everlasting rock, their altar stone,
And Heaven's vaulted arch above, alone.
But twenty centuries have rolled along,
And left no record but the poet's song.
In times succeeding these, another race
Possess'd the land, and left a softer grace
About such scenes—they peopled all the glade
With elfs and fairies, dancing in the shade
Of forest green, or in the moon's pale light
Keeping their merry orgies through the night;
Until returning day's awakened power
Sent them to couch within the blue-bell's flower.
The thoughts of other days, the times of old
Pass as a dream, or like a tale that's told.
Yet do we love to ponder musingly
And lift the veil of hoar antiquity,
Plunge in the dark abyss of bygone days,
And feed our fancy with a backward gaze.

The rock was reach'd, and, winding round its base,
They would have enter'd on an open space;
But what is this? What means this short delay?
What intercepts them in the narrow way?
The foremost horse is down—some obstacle
Is in his path, o'er which he spurn'd and fell,
The rest are all obstructed—Hark! the man
Is calling out who occupied the van,
"Help! comrades—help!" with stumbling haste they speed
To render him assistance in his need.
Then rose a voice in accents of command,
"Halt! Stand!—I charge you in the king's name—stand!"
And coming from their ambush in the front,
A party stands prepared to bear the brunt
Of battle there, while further in the rear,
Prompt at the signal, other men appear.
A moment of dismay assail'd the band
At this unlook'd for resolute command;
Each head threw down its load, and gazed around,
Or rather listen'd for another sound.
But little time was lost—again each hears
A summons to surrender prisoners:

And then a whistle rose, so loud and shrill,
It echoed from the torr and up the hill,
As with a curse, and, bidding them keep back,
The foremost smugglers rushed to the attack;
Each bore a heavy bludgeon in his hand
And strove to force a way, or make a stand:
The officers were arm'd, and well prepared,
Whereas the others had been somewhat snared,
Yet still they were no cowards, and with rage
They, hand to hand, in conflict fierce engage.
But this endured not long, for discipline
With better arms and preparation, win
An easy conquest, as they always do,
Unless strong motives urge the others, too.
Finding the smugglers resolute to fight
In self-defence, and shrouded by the night,
The officers no longer hesitate
To use the arms provided by the state:
One had been levell'd by a heavy blow,
But his assailant soon was laid as low:
A comrade's hand was raised—a vivid light
Of ruddy flame flash'd swiftly on the night,
A sharp report, and then a piercing cry
Burst from the strong man as he fell to die.

Another, and another, gleaming fast,
Like meteors, a moment's radiance cast
Upon the adverse parties, and display'd
An instant's view of how they stood array'd;
Each pistol shot, so close they were at hand,
Had carried death into the smugglers' band;
Till panic-struck, they turn'd in haste and fled,
Leaving the field of battle and the dead,
Some prisoners, and horses with their load,
As trophies of that night's sad episode.
A dreary pause ensued—the gloom profound
Permitted nothing to be seen around;
Then voices spake, at first to ascertain
A comrade's safety—who alive remain,
Hailing by name, to which some one replies,
While orders mingle with the other cries.
A light obtain'd from some materials brought,
Enabled them to promenade the spot,
And take a survey of the battle-field,
Which, sad and silent now, a scene reveal'd,
Beneath the glancing shadows of the light,
Awful to thought and painful to the sight;
Advancing slowly, and with cautious tread,
They stumbled on the foremost of the dead:

Prone on his face, he lay—while, tightly clasp'd,
A heavy stick was in his right hand grasp'd:
Tubs lay around — the ground was wet with blood
Which from a horse had issued in a flood.
Some heavy groans a little to the right,
Attracted them to where, in sorry plight,
Another man was writhing on the ground
With broken leg, but with no other wound.
Him they supported, moaning piteously,
To where the others stood in custody,
Then, passing on, they thread their mazy way
Through kegs and other trophies of the fray:
These they pick'd up and carried to a heap,
Caught two stray horses part way up the steep,
And likewise found a third man lying dead,
A pistol-ball had shot him through the head;
Struck from behind, it reach'd him as he tried
To force his passage up the yonder side;
The death was instantaneous, and he fell
With scarce a pang, if truth the features tell.
Poor wretch! they found 'twas one whom many knew,
The *subject* of our story hitherto:

Mervyn was dead—a victim to the fate
Which follow'd him with unrelenting hate,
From that unlucky day when accident
Had sent him to unjust imprisonment.
Slow pass'd the dismal watches of the night
In weary expectation of the light,
With morning dawn the prisoners were sent,
Under an escort, from the cantonment;
The rest remain'd their captured prize to guard,
Until deposited in safer ward.
The news soon spread of what had taken place,
And rumour, in incredible short space,
Had magnified the horrors of the scene—
"A dozen men were slain—some said fifteen;
The officers had captured all the crew,
Taking the lugger, and her lading too."
Another version represents the fight
Wholly on land, and lasting through the night,
That many men had perished in the strife,
As either side were prodigal of life.
But all agreed, a terrible defeat
The smugglers had sustain'd, the bloodshed great,
That booty of great value was the prize,
Aforfeit to the Customs or excise.

Great consternation through the country reign'd,
Some ran away—and many that remain'd
Trembled with fear, lest something should be found
To speak their presence on the fatal ground.
During the day, some prying stragglers came
To ascertain the truth of common fame,
And gaze upon the dead, survey the site
Made memorable by the bloody fight.
The real news by them was quickly spread
Of whom, in fact, were found among the dead;
Poor Mervyn's name from mouth to mouth was pass'd,
And reach'd his wretched family at last;
Some gossip, far more zealous than discreet,
In well-meant kindness, sought, with busy feet,
His lonely cottage, eager to relate
The mournful tidings of his early fate:
She found the wife in some anxiety,
And wond'ring what should keep him near the sea;
For he, on leaving home, had chanced to say
He hoped this time to be not long away.
With face of length portentous, and a whine
Which pious awe and sympathy combine,

She seem'd a fitting messenger of woe,
At whom to laugh or cry you scarcely know:
She first began, in snuffling tone, to teach
Philosophy—and resignation preach,—
"How God was good to all, and he knew best—
Misfortunes come our constancy to test—
We ought to be resign'd, and humbly bend
Submissive to the rod, lest we offend
Our Father's love, who only meant to bless
And fit us for eternal happiness."
The wife alarmed, broke in on this tirade
And sundry others of the self-same grade,
Meant to console, and earnestly entreated
To hear the tale with which the crone was freighted.
"My husband! where is he?—say! what is wrong?
Tell me at once, or ever hold your tongue."
And through her frighten'd mind dark fancies glide
Of gaols and chains, and nameless ills beside.
But, no! the gossip must her tale impart,
According to the rules of village art
For softening the blow—until suspense
Had wrought to agony each trembling sense,

And so produced a greater irritation
Than if declared without such preparation:
And left the object with diminish'd strength
To sink at once when came the blow at length—
The stunning blow, so far exceeding all
Her fears had painted—of her husband's fall.
Horror was in her look—she did not shriek,
But stood aghast to hear the other speak:
At length, escaped her lips a feeble cry,
Such as alone we utter when we die,
Then from her nose and mouth the crimson blood
Came gushing forth and pour'd a sanguine flood,
Her fleeting senses reel'd, and turning round,
She sunk, supine and senseless, to the ground.
The woman, much alarm'd and terrified,
Ran to assist her, but in vain she tried
To stop the vital stream—the silver cord
Had snapp'd—the wheel was broken at the spring;
The spirit, loosen'd at the tale abhorr'd,
Had from its clay-built mansion taken wing.—
The wretched pair, united thus in death,
Were buried in one grave, and folly saith
That often in the dead watch of the night
Their gliding ghosts alarm the startled sight

Of some lone trav'ller—flitting o'er the heath,
Along the sea-beat shore, or underneath
The lofty torr, when mists the valleys fill,
And shapes are conjured at the gazer's will:
The sea-gull's scream, the lapwing's whistling cry
Arouse the terrors of the passer-by,
Confirm the tales of discontented ghosts
Condemn'd to wander round their former posts.

END OF THE FIRST PART.

PART II.

HARD is the lot of man where want and woe
Compose his sad inheritance below:
Born to a state of care, disease, and pain,
The grave's oblivion is to him a gain.
Thousands—in lieu of gold and spreading lands
Transmitted to them at their parent's hands,
Fair houses, station, competence, and wealth—
Inherit poverty and broken health!
They reap the sure reward of outraged laws,
As certain as effect will follow cause.
Such is the union in this mortal state,
The sour grapes the father's folly ate
Do set, alas! the children's teeth on edge;
The Scriptures this and moralists allege,
And who the joint authority can doubt,
That ever felt hereditary gout?

Surely there must be more than now appears—
The toilsome struggles of a few short years;
The deep, the stern anxieties of life,
Its constant warfare and incessant strife:
The sickness of the soul, of "hope deferr'd,"
When aspirations have the spirit stirr'd
With dreams of high ambition, to be cross'd,
Fritter'd away, or in fruition lost.
It cannot be that this uncertain state
Should form man's only boundary and date,
Merely to fret his hour upon the stage,
Then die and pass away, in youth or age:
If that were so, his animal existence
Would be more independent of assistance,
Less liable to weakness, want, and change;
Sorrow more rare, nor happiness so strange.
The little lambs, who frisk their hours away
In playful gambols through the merry May:
The happy birds, who poised on lightsome wing,
Carol their joyous songs to welcome spring:
The sportive dolphins, bounding on the main,
Now on the wave high riding, now again
Plunged in the heaving bosom of the deep.
Or in the caves of ocean lull'd asleep:—

That glorious sylph-like thing, the butterfly,
With gorgeous wings of gold and purple dye,
Whose radiant hues eclipse the shining gems
Of beauty's wreaths, or monarch's diadems,
And like a child of ether, soars on high,
As if it sought to scale the vaulted sky,
Who draws ambrosia from the violet blue,
And drinks the nectar of the morning dew:—
Even the reptile, who, with mottled back,
Glides, undulating, on his mazy track,
Or on a bank high-coil'd in sunny day,
Darting his tongue, lies basking in the ray:—
These all are happy, most completely blest,
Pleased with their sports and song, their food and rest,
With instinct, fleetness, strength, or skill to shun
Their enemies:—their pleasures, too, begun
Even with life, prepared to live at first,
Their new-born gifts scarce needing to be nurst;
The pliant limbs grow strong, they walk and run,
Fly, swim, or crawl, ere many days are done,
And so continue to the verge of life,
Then ripen'd drop, or die in battle's strife.

The bounteous gifts of Heaven, too, they share
As freely as they breathe the common air,
All is amain—no primogeniture
Robs all for one—this nature wont endure:
They roam, unfetter'd, through the broad domains
Of sea and air, and earth's wide-spreading plains.
Not so with man—in sorrow and distress
He comes, the type of real helplessness:
But for the bonds of deep maternal love,
A spark from that bright flame that burns above,
He needs must perish, for to that degree
Each living creature in their infancy
Are his superiors, as in after-years,
By intellect, his strength surpasses theirs.
But if he all those obstacles survives
That intercept in youth so many lives,
(Disease and want, which hath such armies wreck'd,
The fruits of poverty and gross neglect,
Or from the care and gorging to excess,
The rich inflict, the file is not much less,)
He reaches man's estate, perhaps untaught,
His powers wasted, mind and being fraught

With evil aspirations, led astray
By ignorance and habit—bearing sway
To warp the noble gifts of Providence
With the debasements of unbridled sense:
Who but for that, and train'd to better things,
Had glow'd with wisdom's best imaginings,
The depths of science fathom'd, or laid bare
The hidden things of earth, and sea, and air.
How many, too, for whom have fondly cared,
In youth, dear friends who no endeavour spared
To make them happy, wise, upright, and good,
Storing their minds with intellectual food,
Have lived to bring upon those friends disgrace;
The glow of shame across the honest face
Of some good father—broke the gentle heart
Of a kind mother, stricken with the dart
Her son's misconduct, parricidal, threw—
And those who gave him life his vices slew.
Others, again, misfortunes have beset,
Whose labours only seem to bring them debt:
To earn subsistence they but toil in vain,
No profit comes to recompense their pain;
Bankrupt in pocket, broken down in health,
They live sad martyrs to the want of wealth.

Even the few on whom success attends,
The pride and glory of admiring friends,
Who march with rapid strides to wealth and fame,
While Fortune showers honours on their name,
Balk'd in some cherish'd wish, the vain regret
Haunts them by night, and all their days beset:
Some are cut off when full before their eyes
The crown of high ambition and the prize
They long have toiled for seems within the grasp,
Ready to drop and settle in their clasp:
The laurel-wreath is scatter'd with the gust
That lays their budding glories in the dust.
On all mankind, whatever be their state,
Lofty or low, the blest or curst of fate,
Barbarians—men whom fine arts civilize—
The meanly wretched, and the worldly wise,
A longing seems to rest, a keen desire,
For something that is to advance them higher,
To fill the aching void their souls possess
For coming joy and future happiness.
It is the instinct of the conscious soul
Pointing the way to some far nobler goal:
They feel that all is not completed here,
But waits fruition in another sphere.

Paul spoke but half the truth wherein he said,
That were no resurrection for the dead
Who die in Christ—his followers would be,
Of all mankind, most sunk in misery.
He might have said, that if the silent tomb
Were man's eternal everlasting home,
He would, of all created things, remain
The only type of having lived in vain—
His boasted reason a poor substitute
For the completer instinct of the brute:
That with unfailing aim secured the end,
No scope to err, no power to offend—
The same in all, and each in that possess'd
The means of being most completely blest.
Alas! the former, with deceptive ray,
Too often glitters but to lead astray,
Always uncertain, oftentimes perverse,
It when abused but makes the wicked worse.
Yet in itself most glorious, from afar,
A beacon light, or like the polar star:
Transcendent honours hath its lustre shed
On Shakespeare, Milton, Locke, and Newton's head,

In them and others, since the world began,
Approved itself God's last best gift to man.
But is it, then, indeed so incomplete,
As to need planting in another seat?
For my own part, I think that even here
It must be good, if men would persevere,
Obey its dictates, reverence its laws,
And make their actions spring from such a cause.
They ought to be more happy than they seem,
'Tis a brave world, I trow, no idle dream,
Its goods are most substantial, and 'tis deck'd
In manner worthy its great Architect.
I stand and look upon its smiling face,
Radiant with beauty, harmony, and grace,
I mark the product of each varied soil,
How richly grateful for a little toil;
The teeming sea, a never-failing store,
Rolling its boundless wealth to every shore.
A great highway, for ever in repair,
Where nations may exchange what each can spare;
Above, below, around, the world contains
Within itself, to recompense our pains,
What well repays the search, or can conduce
To health or pleasure, ornament or use;

To charm the sight, and gratify the taste,
It pours forth treasures to the verge of waste.
I fear 'tis man, unjust unto himself,
A miser, starving in the midst of pelf,
Cruel towards his fellows, who contrives
Himself to be unhappy, and deprives
Others of that which should contentment bring,
And all the joys that from its advent spring.
But leaving the didactic, I resume
My narrative of misery and gloom:—
The wretched orphans suddenly bereft
Of parents and protectors, now were left
To reap the tender mercies that the poor
Too often find within the workhouse door.
I am not one of those who idly rant
Against this refuge of the child of want:
It has been much abused, and may be still
The scene of cruelty, and causeless ill,
Its needful strictness turn'd to harsh restraint,
And thus afforded grounds for loud complaint.
A stint of food from grinding peculation,
Hath justly raised the public indignation,
But yet it hath a noble aim and end
The destitute to shelter and befriend,

To harbour in old age, at others' cost,
The man who on life's billows tempest tost
Worn down with this world's buffets, broken, spent,
Had perished, but for such assistance lent:
And those whom stern misfortune hath oppress'd,
May find a haven there wherein to rest;
None are permitted, to whate'er extent
Their destitution is a punishment
For past imprudence, folly, or excess,
To die unaided in their helplessness;
The system may have faults, and 'tis unwise
To see them not, because we shut our eyes,
But still withal its object does impart
An equal honour to the head and heart.
Two boys and girls had Mervyn left behind,
The eldest two were old enough to bind
Apprentices, according to the mode,
The others in the poor-house still abode:
Arthur was only seven years of age,
Too young and weak at present to engage
In labours of the farm, and he remained
Until more strength and stature were attained.
At nine years old they bound him out at length
To battle with the world, and gather strength

As fortune should decide—till twenty-one,
Twelve tedious weary years must travel on
To bring emancipation. In a suit
Of parish clothes equipt from head to foot,
He left his two years' home, but bore away
Too little other profit from his stay.
Poor little fellow! with a pale, thin face
And aching heart, he went to fill his place,
The ready tear hung trembling in his eye,
When bidding his companions a good-bye;
Playmates they hardly were, for childhood's joy
Had been attempered with too much alloy
To flourish in that soil; they had in truth
But little of the sports of happy youth.
Yet still he dreaded change, for hitherto
From bad to worse was all the change he knew;
And judging by the past, he feared to find
Worse ills before than those he left behind.
Sorrow had left its mark, and early care
Had stamp'd him with a sad and thoughtful air
In one so young unusual, but distress
Increased his native tact and cleverness.
To weed the garden, drive the cows afield
At first was all the service he could yield;

Then followed leading horses at the plough,
Or oxen driving, as the times allow:
He who is youngest lad upon a farm
Will lack no exercise to keep him warm,
From early dawn (in winter long before)
Till night shall close again the farmer's door
There is no rest for him; the slave of all,
What can the weakest do but go to wall?
Whatever may be thrown upon his back
By workmen, women, boys, he must not lack
In due performance, till some younger slave
Shall take his place, or he is in his grave.
Promotion comes at last, a junior drudge
Must yield to him, and at his bidding trudge,
And he in turn will exercise a sway,
So true it is 'Each dog will have his day.'
And oftentimes ('tis matter for reflection)
Those who have suffered most when in subjection,
Were most abused, hard treated, and oppressed,
More buffeted, and stinted of their rest,
Will prove the greatest tyrants when in power,
And revel in the triumph of the hour—
On others with unfeeling hand repay
What they have suffered in their early day,

Forgetting all their sorrow, grief, and pain—
Of which no other records now remain
Than this impression—what themselves endured
Others might bear, and be like them inured.
The slave become a master, oft displays
The most amount of harshness in his ways.
In summer though the work is long and hard,
From common pleasures they are not debarr'd;
The harvest brings much jollity and mirth
Housing the bounteous products of the earth;
They toil and sweat beneath the blazing sun,
But feast in plenty when the day is done;
The song goes round, while nut-brown ale they quaff,
And joke and tale excite the joyous laugh;
All is abundant then to lighten toil
And cheer the hardy children of the soil;
In every region 'tis a jocund time
When autumn pours the products of each clime
To gladden man with that abundant store
Whose budding promise greeted him before,
His soul is joyful with prosperity,
And all partake in more or less degree.

But winter comes, bleak, comfortless, and chill,
To those who have to brave it on the hill
Or open field, obnoxious to the force
Of sleet, and hail, and wind, with murmurs hoarse,
The young are most exposed, and suffer much
With bitter cold, from what they needs must touch.
Standing throughout the day on some high ground
No shelter near, and all the landscape round
One dreary white, the snow descending fast,
While piercing blows the keen and churlish blast,
To gather turnips for the hungry kine,
Poor little wretch ! a cruel fate is thine !
Thy fingers numb'd until devoid of sense,
Chapp'd, blained, and blistered by the cold intense,
The turnips, always chilling at the best,
Now lumps of ice, seem freezing winter's crest.
Yet time wore on, the seasons came and went
Without producing any marked event.
Our little friend the usual changes stood
Of summer heat, and winter's angry mood ;
Now with a nose of blue and shaking form,
Shrinking with cold before the nipping storm,
Anon, half frying in the scorching ray,
Beneath the blaze of some hot July day.

Yet still he thrived withal, and grew apace,
While ruddy health was painted in his face;
For though exposure and a life of toil,
Sore tried his frame, to both there was a foil—
His food was coarse, 'tis true, but well supplied,
And that with hungry boys will often hide,
Or counteract, the hardships of a life
Of labour, passed 'mid elemental strife;
Besides, it is not always in extremes,
The sun sometimes will shine with milder beams,
And genial days will now and then appear
In all the various seasons of the year.
Then will the open air and exercise
Brace up the frame, and make the spirits rise,
Create a glow of health, and drive away,
The fruits of many an unpropitious day.
There is in nature such vitality,
So deeply seated is her agency,
That 'tis no easy matter to withstand
Or neutralize the workings of her hand.
The tendency and scope of all the laws
Proceeding from the great sublime First Cause,
So points to good, that foolish sinful man
May check, but cannot crush, do what he can.

'Tis true the aged poor too oft present
Marks of the toil in which their lives are spent;
The stooping frame, distorted limbs and back,
Which aches and cramps, and rheumatisms rack,
Point to a life of hardship as the cause
For which they suffer thus from Nature's laws:
Yet 'tis not labour in itself alone,
That works those evils under which they groan,
But want of food nutritious, clothing warm,
To cheer them on returning from the storm;
A change of dress when deluged with the rain
Instead of putting on the same again
Cramping their limbs and chilling all their frame,
Is one strong reason they are halt and lame;
Another is the wretched habitation
Allotted to their poverty of station;
These all conjoined, afford sufficient ground
Why many crippled, deaf, and bent, are found.
Those animals which render man their aid,
Are better fed, have more attention paid,
Witness the brewer's dray, or merchant's car,
What noble steeds!—how fat and sleek they are!

Their mighty strength is purchased and sustain'd,
By some return of what their labour gained;
While man, so much the nobler of the two,
Is left to cold neglect:—Alas! how few
Enjoy a tithe the comforts and the cheer
That fill their fellow lab'rers through the year.
A life of toil, privation, want, and care,
Is all the rich man can his brother spare;
No, 'tis not all—or fear or caution gave,
A workhouse refuge, and a pauper grave.

The boy had had the fortune to be bound,
To one who till'd his own paternal ground;
A man of substance, capital, and worth,
Humane to all who met around his hearth.
A readiness to learn, and strong desire
For such small knowledge as he could acquire,
With general acuteness and good sense,
Besides an effort to avoid offence,
Soon made him much a favourite with all—
His mistress said, while he was yet but small,
He did an errand better than the rest,
And she of course preferr'd who did it best.
His master found him, as he older grew,
A useful servant, and a faithful, too,

On whom he could for thoughtfulness depend,
Who seldom did what *he* had need to mend.
A genius for mechanics, made him turn
His leisure time its principles to learn;
At least such little as he well could reach
From what a country carpenter could teach;
He had a knack of carving, and would bring
A piece of timber to a shapely thing;
Small toys at first, a little horse, or cow,
And then produced the model of a plough;
This for his master's children was a prize
That gave him great importance in their eyes;
And, when about fifteen, he made a ship
With masts and spars, like those that in a trip
To Plymouth once, upon some holiday
He saw and carried in his mind away;
Their joy was so complete, that in return
They taught him what he long had wished to learn,
To read and write; on every night of leisure
He followed this, and they again took pleasure
To be his little teachers, and convey
What they had learnt at school throughout the day.
Each Sunday afternoon was always spent
In thus obtaining mental nourishment,

And such his ardent, persevering mind,
That difficulties soon were left behind.
He knew his teachers' zeal might chance to tire,
And so it was his object to acquire
Enough at first to put him in the train
For further progress, if they should refrain.
The primer in his pocket, he would con
Its pages briefly as he travelled on,
And while at work would often take a glance,
Refresh his mind, and stimulate advance.
His efforts were productive of success,
For perseverance stops at nothing less;
In two years' space he wrote a decent hand,
Easy to read, and therefore understand.
Another year, to gain facility
In reading, spelling, and chirography;
And then his young ambition thought it right
To dare the hazard of the higher flight
He long had hoped to reach, but slow and sure
Took time his present knowledge to mature;
One thing at once he felt he might succeed in,
Which common sense and practice both agreed in.
Then came the hour at length in which he might
Without presumption gird him for the fight,

With crabbed figures ranged prepared for action,
By keen addition and acute subtraction.
Multiplication, simple and compound,
Division, long and short, in time he found,
Yield to the steady efforts of a will,
Whose best allies were energy and skill.
To master these, and fix them on his mind,
Consumed the remnant of the years behind
Remaining of his bondage, and enough
For one who had a peasant's lot to rough
Upon a farm, learning to plough and sow,
To hedge and shear, make ricks, or reap and mow;
These were his main employments, and the zest
For self-improvement made him learn the rest;
Pursued amid such obstacles, as show
What persevering youth can overthrow.
Besides, by day and night, though working hard,
His ingenuity was not debarr'd,
From exercise, to plan and introduce
Improvements in the tools in common use.
Many a scheme his active brain would frame,
Which others seized and labell'd with their name;
The carpenter, and country blacksmith, too,
Made little fortunes by the hints they drew,

And carried out from Arthur's teeming mind,
With iron ploughs and tools of every kind;
He loved to watch them at their work, and aid,
With ready hand, as often as he stay'd
To have his horses shod, or sole relaid:
Invention was his forte, his talent lay
In pointing out a new and better way,
And would suggest what came into his head,
While they had sense to value what he said.

In toiling, scheming, learning, seasons pass'd
With rapid wing, and twenty-one at last
Is reached, the date at which the man is free
To traffic on his proper industry;
Make market of his skill and native strength
To the extent of depth, and breadth, and length
The laws will give him tether—these, alas,
Too strongly moulded by a ruling class,
Cramp the resources of the common man,
Who is not free of that more favour'd clan;
Give not his efforts scope, but bind him down,
To live a drudge and die a muddy clown.
True that at times the seeming earthy clod,
Stampt with the seal and impress of a God,

Bursts through the vulgar bands, and rends away
What would eclipse its intellectual ray;
Genius, too mighty for these warping ties,
Soars up, and claims its kindred with the skies;
Before its awful front the shadows flee
Of selfish might and gaunt monopoly.
Oh! how this people worship at the shrine
Of wealth! as if its gifts were all divine;
They serve the golden calf, and bend the knee
With slavish zeal and base idolatry.
Let those bow down who will—be mine to show
I love the soil where manly virtues grow;
Him will I honour whose exalted soul
Will sympathize with man from pole to pole;
Wit, wisdom, learning, wheresoever found,
With kings and lords, or tillers of the ground:
Who leaves the world improved—at least, who tries
To make it better—only will I prize.
Skill'd in the daily routine of the farm,
Possess'd of youth and health—a lusty arm,
For thought, contrivance, industry renown'd,
Arthur might choose among the farmers round
What place he liked: but anxious not for change
Preferring not the new because 'twas strange,

He bargain'd to remain a twelvemonth more
Where he had spent his 'prenticed years before.
Good masters make good servants, and 'tis true,
The latter influence their masters too ;
An honest servant, careful and discreet,
In whom the humble virtues seem to meet,
Laborious, trusty, thoughtful, full of zeal,
To do his duty for a master's weal—
With such an one full half the task is done
By which a good employer's name is won.
The worthless oft are those who most complain,
Who seldom long in any place remain ;
From post to pillar buffeted about,
Wanting no aid when in to get them out,
These are the men who give an evil name
To what their own misconduct but became,
And like the fable proves, the weakest spoke
Is just the one most liable to croak.

The dreadful war which for so many years
Had deluged Europe's soil with blood and tears,
Wasting her treasure, drying up the springs
Whence wealth proceeds, on commerce-spreading
wings,

Whilst ever and anon the booming guns
Were mowing down the noblest of her sons.
Peace spread her dove-like wings, and shrieking
fled,
Scared by the piles of slain, the countless dead,
And desolation stalked across the land,
A blood-stained sword clutch'd in one bony hand.
The other grasp'd and waved a burning brand,
The mutual slaughters, famine, and disease,
That ravaged earth and tainted every breeze,
Had decimated full the nation's youth,—
Drawn out to fall before the cannon's mouth,
To gorge the eagles with the flesh of men,
And lure the grim wolf from his savage den,
Or cast to feed the monsters of the sea,
When navies struggled fierce for mastery.
This sacrificial drain upon the land
Made blood, and bones, and sinews in demand,
To gorge the war-fiend's all-devouring maw,
And take their turn for Pluto's realm below.
All means were used to tempt the headlong youth,
The ministers of heaven-descended truth
(Alas, by church and state communion quench'd)
On the recruiting sergeant's office trench'd,

And preach'd the spoiler's trade: extoll'd the man
Who blue or scarlet mounted, and began
To waste, and burn, and slay, and madly mar
The human form divine in horrid war.
Yes! shame to say it, those would be successors
Of apostolic martyrs and confessors,
Of Him whose holy office, too, began
With "peace on earth and good will towards man,"
In God's own house bray'd out the hero's name,
And loudly blew the brazen trump of fame:
The Christian temples echoed with the sound,
And martial deeds from vaulted roofs rebound:
They consecrated banners for the brave
To rush to battle where their colours wave,
And die around or bear them gallantly
O'er mangled bodies on to victory.
The tatter'd ensigns taken from the foe,
In high cathedrals hung, a dusky row,
Wave to the pealing anthem's lofty strain
As once they flutter'd on the sanguine plain.
For Iopæans rise, and joyous songs—
"The victory is God's—to him belongs
The breaking of the arrow and the bow,
The sword, the shield, the battle, and the foe."

Thus will they dare profane his hallow'd shrine
With trophies steep'd in blood, whose law divine
Forbad the strife of nations, and abhorr'd
The taking and the smiting with the sword:
And those who led the way to dusky death,
Amid the din of arms—whose latest breath
Was tainted with fierce hate, and scorn, and rage,
Which must exist where adverse hosts engage.
The captains and commanders sculptured lie
In monumental marble: Fie! oh, fie!
The sacred fane, the fervent men of old
Raised to the God of Peace, should now enfold
Within its hallow'd walls the effigies
Of spoilers of the earth, destroyers on the seas.

While men enlisted with a willing mind,
And sold themselves for hire to slay mankind,
While fair *persuasion* was the only force
To enter them in such a bloody course,
However we may reprobate the end,
The means were such as none may discommend:
We may regret the ignorant and poor
Should be enticed to steep themselves in gore;

That Christian men, apostates to their creed,
Should basely lend their aid to such a deed,
And from the pulpit rouse the passion's strife
To headlong rage, destroying human life,
Yet liberty exists to go or stay,
The tempter may be safely kept at bay,
And if he yields, the object's own volition
Concurs in shaping thus his sad condition.
But what where tyrant rulers do not use
To give their bond-slaves privilege to choose?
Declare a war without their first consent—
Against the count, to aid the men of Ghent—
To place an archduke on the throne of Spain,
Or crush a rival power on the main,
Subdue a nation struggling to be free,
By aiding despots in their tyranny,
And when arousing from their long repose
Of death-like sleep an outraged people rose,
And burst the galling, soul-degrading chain
That had on them and theirs for ages lain,
With insolent presumption thwart the choice
And interfere to stifle the free voice
Of independent men, whose sole consent
Had right to form their own self-government.

To war in such a quarrel, and appeal
To arbitration of the murd'ring steel,
Is bad enough when willing agents bleed
To soften down the horrors of the deed:
But when to feed the havoc, and the drain
Arising from the wounded and the slain,
Recourse is had to that thrice damning act,
Impressment! to supply the numbers lack'd,
What curses from deep hell, what ban of shame
Can I invoke upon that wretch's name
Who dares resort to force, and so constrain,
Against his will, to serve upon the main,
Or in the martial ranks, a free-born man?
Upon his head, dread Heaven, set thy ban!
The mark of Cain upon his sullen brow,
May black remorse assail him—mock and mow
Revile his counsels, and confound his schemes;
May furies haunt him nightly in his dreams,
Till sorrow split his heart or drive him mad!
Is this too bitter? Then I would he had
The fate to be impress'd—to drain the cup
He fill'd for others till he drank it up:
To toil and slave—and balsam for his woes
To reap a rich acknowledgment of blows.

Yet, here soft Pity whispers to my heart,
"You would not wish an enemy a part
So full of woe." Let this, then, be his fate,
To live detested by all good men's hate;
May his dark deeds arise in stern array,
To scare his soul until his dying day,
So may repentance deep assuage his sin,
That Heaven's portals he at length may win.
With deep regret I've ever heard the use
Of stealing men made subject of excuse—
Defended on the score, that in the main,
Our naval strength 'tis needful to sustain:
Perish the navy! Perish England's power,
If to maintain it for a single hour
Such black injustice we must perpetrate!—
There needs no prophet to foretel the fate
That such will be the end, or soon or late,
Of power based on human misery,
Scorning the sacred birthright of the free;
Can nations thrive who wilfully contemn
The rights of man, and God's own law condemn?
In walls and guards the bastille may be strong,
Yet founded not on right, but crying wrong,—

The captives wail, the curses of the brave,
Immured within it as a living grave,
Its own misdeeds will draw destruction down,
And raze the crime-built structure to the ground:
The time must come, the cup shall overflow,
And fell destruction lay the spoilers low.
If to impress be right, then tell me where
That right should stop, or whoso should it spare,
The peer, the merchant, or the royal duke,
Would they this flagrant outrage tamely brook?
Not these! not these? then where, say, should it fall,
Upon the lordling, in his father's hall?
The dapper tradesman, and the parson sleek,
The crafty lawyer, train'd to think and speak,
Or son of Galen smug, with hand so soft—
How would these do to clamber up aloft?
To reef the topsails, rocking in the gale,
When brindled waves with coming rage look pale?
Yet, 'tis but just, the men who have a stake
(To use the canting phrase) the laws should take
To be their own defenders: for their loss
Would be the greatest should the foeman cross

The briny deep, and on old England's shore
The standard of invasion rear once more,
And fierce adventurers, with gloating eyes,
Look to her fair possessions as their prize:
To parcel out among their hungry bands
Her factories, her towns, and fertile lands.
What! will ye dare to make the poor man be
(Whose sole possession is his poverty)
Your substitute! and that against his will!
Perdition catch the doers of such ill,
What has he got to lose if enemies
Should sweep our gallant navy from the seas,
And landing here, the British isles subdue,
What could his losses be compared to you?
Would they deprive him of his poverty?—
Make him a slave! Why, if he now were free,
That would indeed be something: but while he
Is made the prey of heartless tyranny,
Is liable, by laws accursed, to be
Torn from his home, his work, and native plains,
To serve where naval despotism reigns
With power uncontrolled: and ever still,
Against his own and at another's will,

May thus be press'd uncheck'd, *he is not free,*
To call him so is but a mockery.
I trust that those will feel its vulture claw
Who tolerate (if any) such a law:
'Tis fitting that its advocates should first
Its working feel and ascertain the worst.—
In Devonshire, when summer decks the scene,
And forest glades assume a darker green,
When pasture-fields with buttercups look gay,
And sunny June succeeds to fragrant May,
From times of old, each village in rotation,
Sets days apart for sports and recreation:
They call them *revels*, famous for good cheer,
For mirth and skittles, wrestling, buns and beer:
The Sunday sacred to the Patron Saint,
Will usher in the long looked for event,
Then to the little church will crowds repair,
And strangers come to show themselves and stare:
Each good old Liver entertains his friends,
He first with them the parish church attends,
Then to the village alehouse, just to see
The busy, happy, well-pack'd company,
To taste the nut-brown ale and melting bun,
Pass his old jokes, and smiling, view the fun.

His guests, from country town or parish near,
Partake his homely but his hearty cheer:
His table spread with good old English fare,
Their morning's walk or ride, inbracing air,
Will make them much enjoy, while smiles invite,
And pressing warm, to tax the appetite.
Perhaps, again, when comes the dewy eve,
If not too far, before the strangers leave,
They take a stroll to see the wake once more,
And gaze upon the frolics of the poor;
The golden buns which melt within the mouth,
And ale and cider, to supply the drouth,
Have done their work, of each there is no dearth,
All tongues wag fast, and furious is the mirth,
The maiden sits upon her sweetheart's knee,
Or at his side, and who so gay as he.
The Sunday is a sort of rural fête,
To talk, be happy, and enjoy the treat:
The people in their best, their conduct, too,
More decorous, as of a tribute due.
On Monday afternoon, the sports begin,
Of manly contests, dear-loved fame to win;
For fame is precious to the peasant's heart
As 'tis to those who play a higher part.

A love of glory—to be chiefest, best—
Springs up spontaneous in the human breast:
Touch but that spring to which most souls vibrate,
And man will even dare a war with fate.
A prize to play at kayles, a gold-laced hat
To him who lays his adversaries flat,
In wrestling best, for which athletic game
The men of Devon long have had a name,
Two days are thus consumed—at least, *were* so—
I speak of matters thirty years ago,—
Now times are alter'd much, new manners cast
A shadow on this remnant of the past,
Revels, though still kept up in some degree,
Are not at all what they were wont to be;
Perhaps 'tis for the best—I am not one
Prone to walk backwards, but to travel on;
Association, poetry, romance
Point to the past, but reason says—*Advance!*
The grown-up man may look with pleasure back
Upon his childhood's joys, yet sure would lack
A manly mind, if he would e'er return
To A, B, C, and penny primers learn.
As well might he enfold his stalwart frame
In garments that his infancy became.—

'Twas on a day, ere great Napoleon's fall
Had given peace to Europe and to Gaul,
That Stanmore held its revel,—far and near
The woods resounded to the ardent cheer,
The shout of triumph, or discordant groan
When some stout wrestler on his back was thrown,
For Stanmore struggled hard to hold the game
Against the men of Woodcliffe, Leigh, and Rame.—
For some time past the pressing had been hot
To man the Royal Navy—from his cot
They tore the peasant, took the fisherman,
And seize each merchant seaman when they can,
Britain had need of men, for on her hands,
Besides the French—the children of those lands
Our fathers planted in the wilderness
Across the great Atlantic, angry press,
And threaten hateful war, and we had need
Against such men as these to take good heed:
They fought with better weapons than the foe,
Whose naval strength our own had brought so low,
Descended like ourselves, they well maintain
The leaven of the fine old Saxon strain:

Their wide-spread commerce train'd them to the seas,
And men and money were obtain'd with ease.
For ever from free institutions rise
Skill, courage, and enduring enterprise.
Speaking a common language, they could drag
Our ablest sailors from the British flag,
And fight us with our own, and all this, too,
While English vessels lack'd a proper crew,
Would ye the reason know how this befel?
Then mark the cause! *They paid their sailors well,*
Gave them good usage, treated them like men,
And not like muzzled wild beasts in a den.
While England, boasting of her wooden walls
As sure protectors of her hearths and halls,
The stout defenders of her sea-girt land,
Repaid the service with a niggard hand.
While millions squandered worthlessly away
In sinecures and pensions, these her stay,
Her arm of war, and buckler of defence,
Are sacrificed to save a small expense.
True that enough is spent, if well applied,
To keep our gallant seamen on our side,

But in this class-ruled forty shilling land
Votes must be purchased to obtain command,
And those who have them seize as lawful prize
On army, navy, customs, and excise.
Yes, *officers* indeed are nowise scarce,
Which well reminds me of our school-boy farce,
Playing at soldiers, every youth would claim
A lofty title and a sounding name,
As captain, major, colonel, general stand,
But not a common soldier in the band.
I grant a body form'd without a head
Is badly off and might as well be dead,
But aggregate ones may have some relief,
And find within themselves an able chief.
The brave ten thousand, that immortal band
Of warlike Greeks, in Persia's adverse land
Their captain lost, and all their leaders gone,
Yet found in need a greater, Xenophon.
And to come down to these our modern days,
Without detracting from the leader's praise,
The mighty victor who at Waterloo
Baffled his great antagonist, and threw

Aside his genius—when he loudly bawl'd,
" Up Guards, and at them !" Came they not when
call'd
To back his well-plann'd schemes, the head in
vain
Had form'd what hands were lacking to sustain.
An army *may* without its chief be lost,
But sure the latter *must*, without the host,
Be powerless, were he as brave as Roland,
As Cæsar wise, or skilful as Napoleon.
Oh! were not votes a marketable ware,
Purchased with what a minister can spare
In way of office, sinecure, commission,
Our navy would not be in this condition:
Two thousand captains to a hundred sail,
Just *twenty* kept, lest *one* should chance to fail.
And admirals whose flags, if all unfurl'd,
Would more than serve the navies of the world.
What would be said by those who cry, *retrench*,
Instead of twenty judges on the bench,
We kept a staff of *ten times* that amount,
Lest justice should be lacking at the fount?
Is it not vile, to every one employ'd,
There should be nineteen utterly devoid

Of needful occupation? left to run
To waste or seed? and idly in the sun
His manly years throw slothfully away,
Pining and grumbling, *starving* on *half-pay*,
Who, but for this accursed system, would
His industry and skill have turn'd to good.
Flourish'd as merchant, tradesman, or mechanic,
Or broker, scheming for a rise or panic;
Excell'd as author, banker, engineer,
Perhaps laid by a thousand pounds a-year,
Instead of eating out his heart, to feel
The misery of beggary genteel.
Truly the system every way is ill,
Survey its various phases as you will.
The adage says, "that ease proceeds from use,
And habit will facility produce."
If "practice maketh perfect," then the plan
That takes so largely from the life of man
Removes him from the sea, for less or more
Than twenty years, to vegetate on shore:
In rusty ease to sleep his time away,
Apart from aught to keep his hand in play,
At any future time will be less fit
His duties to discharge; because his wit

Is weaken'd by disuse, his knowledge less
Than where emergencies will often press
And stimulate his faculties to meet,
Whether as master of a ship or fleet,
The face of danger, and to look it down,
Or cleave the whirling waters when they frown.
A man laid up for twenty years on shore
Can scarcely be so fit when billows roar,
Or whirlwinds lash the ocean into foam,
As he who long hath used it as a home,
O'er heaving surges fearlessly to ride,
To dare its madness in its hour of pride,
Baffle the fury of the winds and waves
When Folly casts away, but Wisdom saves.
If, then, this costly system does not tend
To forward what should be its chiefest end,
Our maritime efficiency,—remove
The useless mode experience doth prove
To be a worthless outlay—offer, then,
A better rate of wages to the men:
Give them good food, kind treatment, and protect
Themselves, their wives and orphans from neglect;
Receive their batter'd hulls, and grateful waft
To pleasant havens the distemper'd craft:

Reward the meritorious and thus, see
If gallant seamen from our flag will flee!
We shall not need impressment, and shall save
Thousands of pounds: the skilful and the brave
Shall work our fleets, and men no more shall view
The officers and ships without a crew.

The second day of revel at Stanmore
Was witnessing the standards playing o'er,
All was excitement, uproar, and dismay
Throughout the treble and quadruple play,
But when, at length, the favourite was thrown,
A mingled shout, half cheer and half a groan,
Bespoke the varied feelings of the ring,
Some cried, "Well done!" and some, "A settled thing!"
"He gives his back—'a sell'"—"No, no! all right!"
And then the uproar ended in a fight.—
Our hero, Arthur, had been on the ground,
As usual, thrown his man, until he found
A match to whom he, in his turn, must yield,
And measure out his length upon the field;

Then laughing, rose, yet looking not o'er wise
At losing thus his credit, and the prize.—
Leaving the scene of contest, late at night,
Arthur and two companions took the right,
Passing the little church, and by the burn,
Until it made a somewhat sudden turn:
Then down a narrow lane, which led away,
Along the vale, to where their farm-house lay.
The air was clear and calm, and softly cool,
And back from rushing brook and reedy pool
The moonbeams glimmered on the stilly night,
While shone the stars with mild and steady light.
Delicious rose upon the dewy air,
Scenting the valley with its odour rare,
The fragrant sweetness of the new made hay,
Which o'er the verdant meadows thickly lay;
The startled blackbird fluttered from her nest
As their loud laugh disturbed her quiet rest,
And rung with careless glee athwart the glade;
Talking in earnest tones, their way they made
Through quiet lanes to reach their own abode,
Until they came to cross the turnpike road,
But scarcely had they entered there, when, lo!
A sudden grapple from an ambush'd foe,

Seized each man by the collar and the arm,
And struck them dumb with wonder and alarm.
A rapid movement with the heel and toe,
Laid one of Arthur's captors quickly low,
And shook the other off, but instantly
Two others seized him ere he well was free ;
The sudden movement and the great dismay,
Had made the others fall an easy prey.
The struggle past, a would-be wheedling voice
Begg'd to inquire if they would make their choice
To serve the king at sea, who wanted men,
And would be glad such lads to entertain.
A burst of indignation from the three
Who all declared they would not go to sea,
Was met with jeers and scoffs ; and they were told
They might as well go freely, for then gold
Would be some consolation, and their due,
For go they must, howe'er averse thereto.
Chafing with rage, the men exclaimed and swore,
Threatened the gang, and many follies more,
For such they were, to reason with a band
Of armed ruffians, with the upper hand.
But one poor fellow begged to be set free,
And as a last resort, advanced the plea,

His wedding-day was fixt, and would they part
Two lovers thus, and trifle with the heart?
At this a peal of noisy laughter broke
From all the crew, with ribaldry and joke,
And though our Arthur by soft pity moved
Offered to do what else he disapproved,
Become a volunteer, and go to sea,
If they would only set his comrade free,
They still refused, and said the girl must stay,
Her love would keep to some more distant day;
Perhaps she'd prove a termagant, and scold,
At all events was certain to grow old,
While, he might if he please, possess a wife
In every port, and lead a merry life;
A sweetheart, too, was just the thing to be
A sailor's star and compass when at sea.
The bivouac and ambush soon was raised,
And, with two more whom they had likewise seized,
They beat a quick retreat, for with a view
Of catching stragglers, had the press-gang crew
Been sent to lie in wait; they dared not go
Where their appearance would have raised a foe
Too numerous to cope with; they knew well
That hatred deep, as ever legends tell,

Burnt in the souls of Britain's peasantry,
Against the robbers of their liberty;
That all as in a common cause would act
If any at the revel were attack'd.
And with such odds, the dangers of a fray,
Were more than what their heads would like to pay
When stalwart arms, and hearts indignant burn,
The galling chains of slavery to spurn.
Without the power to communicate,
Or bring their friends acquainted with their fate,
Like felons, or like men whose evil deeds
Had made no worthier than noxious weeds,
They forced them onwards with unwilling feet
To Plymouth dock, and then aboard the fleet.
In vain their efforts to obtain release,
The men were poor, and could not purchase peace,
Too mean and lowly, freedom to procure,
Born to be ruled, and therefore to endure;
Should such as these possess an equal choice
With men of acres, whose potential voice
Is heard in senates? To remain on land,
Go here or there, regardless of command?
No! ruin dire must be old England's fate
If e'er reduced to such a wretched state.

What's liberty and life, compared I pray
To the possession of some roods of clay?
Or merit, though of limitless amount
To rascal dross—(for settling an account!)
It once was said "the life is more than meat,
The body more than raiment," yes 'tis sweet,
"A man will give the whole he hath to save
His life from being swallowed in the grave."
Surely this must be wrong—on Britain's soil
The men whose active skill and daily toil
Make all her wealth—are held in less regard
Than what is only labour's rich reward.
The *means* of life is more than life itself,
And human souls of less esteem than pelf.
Dispersed each man on board a diff'rent ship,
They found no means to give them all the slip,
For closely watch'd and tether'd to their post,
The tyrants kept them while upon the coast;
Arthur was entered on the Argo's books,
And here his active frame and sprightly looks,
Made him find favour in the captain's eyes
And officers', who valued such a prize.
When first they put to sea, the usual fate
Of wretched landsmen lessened not his hate

Towards the service, manned by such a course
Of mean entrapping, and detested force.
His soul and body equally were sick,
Loathing the sea, and doubly so the trick
That brought him there; and in his secret heart
He swore when chance should offer, to depart,
No laws should keep him, and no ties should bind,
Nor love of king, of country, nor of kind.
Country, indeed! a bitter stepdame she
To treat like slaves her helpless progeny.
Upon the deep Atlantic's heaving wave,
He longed at times to find therein a grave.
Weaken'd by fasting, and by sickness torn,
He felt so helpless, wretched and forlorn,
As not to wish to live, but would have joy'd
Could he some friendly comrade have employ'd
To take him up and cast him in the sea
And end at once his life and misery.
But yet had Heaven opened to his eyes,
He could not for himself have won the prize,
If to obtain it he must act or rise.
Such the prostration that sea-sickness brings,
On slaves or heroes, demigods, or kings;

Nor wit, nor wisdom, wealth, nor rank, it spares,
And racks the learned head with selfish cares.
But most things have an end, and this at last
Ceased to torment him, and the nausea past.
For eighteen months or more, upon the coast
Of Canada, the ship was at her post,
While England and the Union of the States,
By folly urged, or some say by the fates
Were warring fierce, and trying, with their might,
Which could inflict the most outrageous spite.
They burnt each other's towns, and ravaged lands,
Imbrued in brother's blood their kindred hands,
Loosed the wild Indian at each other's throats,
Who scream'd his war-cry forth; the hideous notes
Resounding through the forest, were the knell
Of many gallant hearts, to whom that yell
Spoke of despair and death, and bitter hate,
The red man's vengeance for his own sad fate.
When like two dogs contending for a bone
(Most truly worthless if enjoyed alone,
But doubly so if purchased by a fray,)
They found that even he who won the day
Had many wounds, but very little food,
A certain evil for uncertain good,

They thought it fit hostilities should cease,
And entered into articles of peace.
The war concluded, orders were dispatched
To bring the Argo home, when Arthur snatch'd
The blissful chance, his wages in his hand,
To leave the ship, and once more tread the land.
He did not wait to spend his dear-bought gains,
The fruit of all his dangers and his pains,
Amid the scenes of riot and excess
Of horrid oaths and brutal drunkenness,
In which too oft the sailor madly wastes
That gold, to gratify his swinish tastes,
Which he has bought with blood and galling toil,
The price of hardships, or the fruit of spoil.
Throughout his term of service, he had borne
Against that system, which had rudely torn
Himself and fellows from their native land
By despotism's rude and ruffian hand,
Enduring hate, which rankled in his mind,
And left the sense of injury behind.
This made him loathe the sea, and ever still
To hold his purpose with a steadfast will,
That nought should keep him, could he ever flee,
A willing slave, whose right was to be free.

With this resolve, he wore a cheerful face,
Content to do his duty for a space
Where he perforce was cast, as sullenness
Would not conduce to make his evils less,
But might afflict him more; among the crew,
His kindly nature soon in favour grew.
The officers perceived the ready zeal
With which he laboured for the common weal,
And tried his best the seaman's part to act,
Pleased with his civil tongue and ready tact;
Whate'er he felt, he kept his counsel well,
Content to bide his time, and thus it fell
That when paid off, no shadow of suspicion
Arose, of hatred to his late condition;
Had that occurred, he would have found it hard
To 'scape the crimps and boatswain's watchful guard,
By far too good a man to lightly lose,
He must be kept by violence or by ruse.
Let but the vilest slave touch British earth,
And though a thrall and bondsman from his birth,
There is a magic in it can transmute
The dross to gold, and raise above the brute

To his true rank among the sons of God,
A human soul—erstwhile a moving clod;
From his freed limbs the fetters melt away,
He springs new-born from the Promethean clay;
But they, the heirs and children of the soil,
The native born, if poor, by whose hard toil
England is great and wealthy, wise, and free—
(No loving mother but a stepdame she,)
Find their true birthright fettered by a chain
Forged by the cruel hands of countrymen.
A noisy band in wild excitement bent,
To live as madmen till their gold was spent,
Proceeded to the haunts where most resort
The reckless seamen when arrived in port,
In loathsome scenes of foul, disgusting vice,
To dissipate with speed the slender price
Of days and nights of toil; the sicken'd soul
Turns with a shudder from this horrid goal,
For gallant men to look at as a home,
In the short periods when they cease to roam.
I fear that those whose influence would check
These sad excesses, which too often wreck
Health, morals, pocket, everything indeed
That men should value, pay but little heed,

Connive, if not encourage in their crew,
The brutal riot which they thus pursue.
Do they endeavour when beneath their rule,
To teach them better than to play the fool?
Do they afford instruction, and impress
Upon their minds, the sin of such excess?
The captain reigns with most despotic sway,
More like a sultan or an eastern bey,
His word is law, no rival there at hand
To thwart or check him in his high command;
Did he direct to run the ship on shore,
Or crowd all sail when sweeping whirlwinds roar,
Against a reef of rocks to turn the helm,
Where fearful billows wait to overwhelm
The fated ship; or in the mäelstroom,
To court the horrors of so dread a doom,
To dare the dogs of Scylla, or to ride
Where fell Charybdis rolls her awful tide,
However madly wicked, wild, or weak,
His orders are, the sailor must not speak
Nor disobey, on pain of martial law,
Though certain death should from his orders flow.
If then the power such for good or ill,
How much might be effected, were the will

Exerted in behalf of virtue's cause,
In teaching men to reverence the laws
Of nature's God, and aid the blinded soul
To burst the bonds of sensual control;
But no! the wise and worthy notion rules,
That to fight well, the class of knaves and fools,
Wild, reckless men, regardless of to-morrow,
Who drink confusion to all care and sorrow,
Are best adapted; fittest to be made
Dull food for powder in the slayer's trade;
Fair living targets, just to stop the balls
When from the bulwark of his wooden walls
The British lion roars; or takes the field,
And strikes the bosses of his sounding shield.
Perhaps they're right, it argues no great wit
That any man should ever think it fit
To stand up to be shot at for the pay
Of coarse black bread and fourteen pence a day.
And so they keep them ignorant and poor,
That dupes may still be willing as of yore.
With money just received in Portsmouth yard,
A band proceeded to the Common Hard,
Wild was their mirth and boisterous the glee,
With which they hail'd the prospect of a spree;

Led by a warrant officer or two,
Apparently the foremost of the crew
In keen desire to snatch the passing hour
Of short release from arbitrary power,
But who were there as much to spur them on
To wild excess, that when the gold was gone
They might be just at hand to lead them back,
To join such ship as seamen chanced to lack.
Soon at another house of choice resort,
One of the many found in such a port,
With floods of grog were placed a noisy band,
Shouting and swearing, while in every hand
The ever-prized tobacco-pipe is found
Spreading a cloud of stifling vapour round.
Drest in his gayest suit, and on his back,
Each under garment that he well could pack,
Arthur had joined his comrades for the day,
Intending when he could to steal away.
He took no parcel in his hand to show
That he a journey inland thought to go,
But left the rest on board, as if he meant
To join again whene'er the cash was spent.
His money well secured, with seeming zest,
He shared the mirth and pleasure of the rest,

Yet drank with moderation; all but he
Soon showed the marks of having made too free.
In louder tones their noisy clamour rose,
While words at times seem'd tending fast to blows.
When towards evening, from the clash of tongues,
Proceeded stories, boastings, oaths, and songs,
A mingled din, and each one seem'd intent
On his peculiar source of merriment,
Arthur arose, and unobserved withdrew,
To put in force what he had thought to do;
Leaving the house, with busy feet he sped
Along the streets, to where a drawbridge led
Beyond the walls that girdled Portsmouth round;
Passing the archway, soon himself he found,
Leaving with hasty strides the town behind,
Cheered by the pleasant hopes that fill'd his mind
Of being once more uncontroll'd and free,
Safe from the toils and dangers of the sea.
Taking the London road he travell'd on,
While overhead the moon with lustre shone,
Serenely coursing through the fields of air;
Now in the depths of ether, still and fair,
Her placid face reflects a silver light,
And, from her radiance, earth appears more bright,

Anon, enveloped in a fleecy cloud,
Which spreads its gauzy texture like a shroud,
To dim the pearly brightness of that face,
The type of beauty, harmony, and grace.
Rising above the flat, the way he went
Now pointed upwards with a slight ascent;
Gaining the top, he paused to look around,
And listen to a low and distant sound;
Along the silent air, upwafted, steals
A hollow rumble like the noise of wheels;
Nearer it comes, he hears the steady beat
And heavy trampling of the horses' feet,
Till close at hand the Evening London Mail
Pulls up responsive to his cheerful hail.
A moment served to take an outside place,
When on again they press, with rapid pace,
O'er barren heaths they hold their lonely way,
Through fields and forest glades; until the day
Burst from the lap of night, and gaily flung
A cheerful ruddy glow upon the throng
Of countless houses, columns, domes, and spires,
Which sparkled in the distance, as the fires
Of Phœbus' beams were from his chariot hurl'd,
And lighted up again the one half world.

'Twas London now in sight, whose vastness meets
The gazer's eye, and, thund'ring through the streets,
The smoking horses rush, until they gain,
The welcome inn where they are to remain.
Alighting here, our Arthur paid his fare,
Then wander'd forth, and ere he was aware
Became absorb'd in that unceasing stream,
(Swift rolling on like objects in a dream,)
Of busy life which throng the streets of town,
Pressing as if to run each other down.
Gazing with wonder at the novel scene,
So strange to one who hitherto had been
Accustomed from his youth to haunt the grove,
The field, or open down, perhaps to rove
At times through Plymouth streets, at periods rare,
And who of late had only had a share
Of some few yards of space to stand and sleep,
In England's wooden walls upon the deep.
The noble horses, coaches, carts, and drays,
That thunder'd on, or stopt the crowded ways,
The gorgeous shops, the clamour, and the cries,
Excite his mind with wonder and surprise.
And so he wandered on throughout the day,
He could not lose, because he had no way,

'Twas all alike to him, the east or west,
With money either would provide a rest
To lay his head at night or fill his mouth,
But, that ingredient wanting, north or south
Might all be traversed, and explored in vain—
He'd merely get the trouble for his pain.
Weary at length with wandering about,
He sought a cheap and lowly ale-house out
Wherein to lodge, and gladly went to bed
Ere night again her sable wings had spread.
Refresh'd with sleep, next morning when he rose
He issued forth to change his sailor's clothes,
And got instead a simple fustian suit,
Giving the old and a small sum to boot.
His object henceforth was to shun the sea,
And take his labour where he might be free,
This thought possess'd his mind, and much he weigh'd,
The many reasons that his judgment sway'd,
To settle here or there; his spirit yearn'd
To see his native hills, but there return'd
What should preserve him from a second wrong
More than at first, if need should rouse the strong.

No! that was running in the lion's mouth,
To seek again his dear and native south.
A midland county, far from any port,
Where sailors congregate or ships resort,
Would keep him safest, when the tyrant's plea
Again required fresh conscripts for the sea.
A few days more, and he was on his way
To Birmingham, intending there to stay
And seek employment in the iron trade,
Or aught by which a living might be made.
His genius for mechanics bade him try
His fortune first in what appeared to lie
In that peculiar province, though he meant
To be not over squeamish, but content
With what should offer, so that honest toil
Should win a living on old England's soil.
'Twas hard indeed, if, with his clerkly skill,
His knowledge of accounts, and, better still,
A most ingenious persevering mind,
Determined to succeed, he could not find
An opening somewhere to afford him scope
For realizing all he dared to hope.
The gold reserved when he received his pay,
Well husbanded against a rainy day,

Would keep him with economy, from want
For many weeks, should labour prove but scant.
With health and buoyant spirits he set forth
To take his journey to the busy north,
On foot he went, and in his strong right hand,
He grasp'd a sturdy cudgel, for a wand
To aid him on the road, a little pack,
Now on his arm and some time on his back.
Walking—and riding when he had the chance,
He thus continued swiftly to advance,
Sometimes a butcher's cart or farmer's wain
Would take him up, and set him down again
Refresh'd, and fit to walk another stage,
Or till some other mode he could engage.
A road side alehouse sheltered him at night,
And sent him forth again with morning light,
At little cost, his journey to pursue,
Until some lofty chimneys came in view,
Rolling their murky clouds of smoke on high,
To black the houses and obscure the sky,
And din of hammers striking on his ear,
Proclaim'd the town of Birmingham was near.
Arrived at length, his care was first to seek
For humble lodgings rented by the week,

At some low charge proportioned to the state
His purse was in, and prospects at that date.
After a day or two in quiet spent
In resting to recover, forth he went
To look around, and see what could be seen,
Pick up the news, and information glean,
To guide him in his search; day after day,
He tried without success to find some way
Of maintenance, above the lowest class.
His genius without practice could not pass
The muster as a subaltern, nor reach
A point where he in theory might teach.
Unknown to any whom he could refer
Inquirers for a proof of character,
Unfriended, and a stranger, how should he
Procure a place of trust, or hope to be
Blind fortune's minion, and obtain her smiles
Which every adverse circumstance beguiles?
Mere labour he could easily obtain,
But his strong inclination was to gain
A footing in some workshop, where his will
Would force him on to gain mechanic skill.
Failing this cherish'd object, he began
To enter into treaty with a man,

A common blacksmith, for a premium paid,
A trifling sum, to learn the other's trade;
'Twould clear his cash remaining, while his pay,
Until a year at least had passed away,
Would be but small—barely enough to be
A meagre living, with economy.
This, or to live and work a year for nought,
Supplied with food, was what the other sought.—
Crossing one day some path-fields near the town,
Revolving all these things, his head bent down,
And musing sadly what was best to do,
He spied a little book half hid from view
Within a tuft of grass, upon the ground;
Taking it up, he quickly glanced around,
But no one was in sight; with anxious look,
He opened to inspect the pocket-book,
When lo! a roll of bills, of bulky size,
Appear'd within, before his wond'ring eyes:
Two hundred pounds, he found, was the amount,
With other things of more or less account;
(Papers and memoranda, which, indeed,
Worthless to him, he did not stay to read,)

A sum of fourteen guineas, and a *name*,
In fair round hand, which told who own'd the same,
His residence, and where he might be found,
Which thus he learnt before he left the ground.
It chanced 'twas one to whom he had applied
A few days since for work, and been denied,
Though civilly—a maker of machines
And implements—of comfortable means,
Though not engaged in quite so large a way
As many other makers of the day.
Without a moment's doubt or hesitation
As to the proper use and application
Of what he thus had found, for well he knew
That honesty forbade, and justice, too,
To keep what was another's right to own,
That other owner being likewise known,
He turn'd to find his house, without a thought
That he was doing other than he ought:
Integrity in him was far too strong
To wish to *do*, though he had *suffer'd* wrong,
For every justly regulated mind
Will only think of holding what they find

As trustees for the loser, nor advance
Their own success by other men's mischance.
Ten minutes' walking, at an active pace,
Brought him in sight of Mr. Redmond's place,
Whom straightway he inquired for and found
(Attended by his clerks, who stood around)
In seeming perturbation, talking fast
And anxiously of something that had pass'd:
He heard the sound of "twenty pounds reward"
"Advertisement"—while one seem'd writing hard,
As taking down instructions:—with a smile,
Arthur advanced, and begg'd to speak awhile
With Mr. Redmond:—in a hasty way,
The latter ask'd him what he had to say.
"I call, sir, just to ask if you have been
In Hardmere fields this morning, near the Green,
And if so, whether you have lost a book?"
"Yes!" cried the other, with an eager look,
"A scarlet one, with pockets at the sides
For notes and papers, which the book divides,
Two hundred pounds in bills, besides some gold,
And other papers which I leave untold,
Because my name, profession, and address
Is written there in full—a proof express.

See!" he exclaim'd, "that notice writing there,
We even now to advertise prepare!"
"It is enough," said Arthur, "without doubt,
This pocket-book is yours," and drew it out:
"I'm very happy to relieve your mind,
By thus returning what I chanced to find
Within this hour: examine, sir, and say,
If all remains as when 'twas lost to-day."
Taking the book, he look'd the papers through,
Counted the bank notes, and the guineas, too,
The memoranda—all that it contain'd!
Then looking up, he said, "Indeed, my friend,
There's not a tittle missing that I find:
Truly, I'm much indebted for the kind
And honest feeling which has brought you here,
Saving me much anxiety and fear,
For papers of more consequence to me
Than were the gold and notes which here you see
Were likewise lost: and now I fain would know,
Besides my hearty thanks, what more I owe,
To recompense the debt thus far incurr'd,
Speak what you think, and tell me at a word."
"I bring you not in debt, sir," Arthur cried;
"I thought not of reward, nor aught beside,

In bringing you your own, but just to do
What I should wish myself to reap from you,
You are most welcome to the little good
That I have done: for be it understood,
It cost me nothing but the coming here,
And honesty compell'd me to appear."
"Nay," cried the other, "you have fairly earn'd
The full reward to have this book return'd
That I was taking steps to advertise
When you came in, so timely, with the prize.
This twenty pounds is certainly your due,
And which, with many thanks, I tender you."
A thrill of pleasure ran through Arthur's veins,
As once he thought of how his slender means
Would be improved by owning such a sum,
To make provision for the time to come:
'Twould pay the smith his premium, and thus give
A prospect for the future, how to live:
But then he thought, again, it was not right
To tax so heavy for an act so slight:
Or take advantage of a gen'rous soul,
Whom gratitude, at losing not the whole,
Would lead to pay so bountiful a price
For doing what implied no sacrifice:

And answering, he said, " I cannot make
My conscience up, so large a sum to take,
For just the little trouble that I took
In lifting up, and bringing here, a book:
It matters not that it contain'd much wealth,
It was not mine, unless 'twere so by stealth,
And that, I hope, though destitute and poor,
Will never be a burden at my door:
A guinea will sufficiently repay
The little service I have done to-day."
Pleased and surprised such sentiments to hear,
So well befitting of a higher sphere,
The master stood, and gazing for a space,
Replied, " I seem familiar with your face,
Pray have you not been lately to apply
For labour here?" The other, with a sigh,
Responded, " Yes! I've been a weary round!"
" And have you not as yet employment found?"
" No, sir! there was no vacancy with some,
Others, again, would ask me whence I come—
And why so far from home: I could not give
A reference, save only where I live,
And there I am a stranger, known to fame,
By just a fortnight's sojourn and my name."

"Well," said the other, smiling, "if you will,
We'll try to find a place for you to fill,
We need no better surety, than the fact
Of having known you do a worthy act;
'Tis Tuesday now, on Friday come again,
If you, on trial, answer, to remain
Here, take this pen, and let me see you write!"
Then holding up the paper to the light,
"Ah! this will do," he cried; "'tis firm and plain,
Now you may go! on Friday come again."
With fourteen guineas, Arthur took his leave,
(This Mr. Redmond forced him to receive,)
And went, with joyous spirits, to his home,
Cheer'd by the hopes of better days to come.
His conscience pleased at having acted right,
Soothed him by day, and in his dreams at night
He saw in long perspective, wealth and fame,
A life of virtue, and an honour'd name.—
The intervening time was rightly spent,
In qualifying for the hoped event:
He wrote and cast accounts incessantly,
And thus acquired renew'd facility.
On Friday, when he went, a junior place,
A sort of common clerkship, for a space,

Was given him, to overlook and keep
Minor accounts, which learning not too deep
Was equal to, and forty pounds a-year—
And further, what he greatly did prefer,
His duty led him where he oft could see
The form and structure of machinery:
In this his genius fitted him to take
An active part, and often would he make
Some shrewd suggestion, tending to improve
The form in some, in others to remove
Defects in power, structure, or design:—
Thus placed where he had scope and heart to shine,
His zeal was not unmark'd, and by his skill
Display'd in some improvements in a mill,
His master's trade was soon so much enlarged
That workmen needed not to be discharged,
But others taken on, and Arthur's pay,
Before the first twelve months had pass'd away,
Was made two pounds per week, with leave to take
What time he pleased experiments to make:
Attentive to his duty, he would stay
Sometimes through half the night as well as day,

Engaged in fitting some new wheel or spring,
Careless of time and every outward thing.
He wrought himself, acquired the workman's art,
And thus his own ideas could impart
In surest fashion, palpable, direct,
Or bad designs in principle detect.
Thus he invented and turn'd out of hand
A roasting apparatus, wisely plann'd,
Fuel and labour to economize,
In a utensil of a mod'rate size.
Thousands of these were sold: as patentees
His masters join'd him, paying all the fees;
This was the first that on his own account
He so partook of, saving what amount
His kind employers, generous and just,
Forced him to take, or held for him in trust.
Their house, erewhile but third or second rate,
Was fast approaching to the first estate,
Acquiring credit for superior ware,
Chiefly produced by one man's skill and care.
In useful labours pass'd three years away,
While Arthur, still improving day by day,
Was by his steady, upright, honest course,
And enterprising skill, the fruitful source

Of profit to his masters, whose esteem
He firmly won: his conduct was the theme
Of their eulogium, as they held him forth
A model for his probity and worth,
A bright example, whom they bade to mark
And try to learn of him, each junior clerk.
He now was in the annual receipt
Of full five hundred pounds, no sum unmeet
For such desert, besides the extra gold
Derived from movements patented and sold.
He oftentimes appear'd, an honour'd guest,
At either master's board, on days of rest,
Who gladly paid to merit honour due,
Though found in one who had been poor, 'tis true,
Yet, by his genius, industry, and sense,
Might mix with nature's kings without offence.
His next invention was a new machine
For lifting heavy weights, on which was seen
A novel movement, working like a pump
In double action, that a cumbrous lump
When raised would not recede, but firmly stand,
And need no holding by the workman's hand:
Up stroke and down, its power was the same,
Still speeding up, and ever where it came,

The click retain'd it, while the working gear
Righted itself, and kept the power clear:
Simple yet strong, the leverage was such
To lift a ton scarce needed but a touch.
This caused such noise, that overtures were made
To enter him a partner in the trade,—
His masters so determined, to retain
Such services, lest he might not remain:
For many were the tempting offers sent
To draw him off, if such were his intent.
Though Arthur's grateful mind paid no regard
To those attempts, 'twas fitting to reward
At once his skill and honourable sense,
By thus promoting him in self-defence.—
Behold him now, that poor and orphan boy,
Whose youth had pass'd with scarce one gleam of joy,
Whom dark affliction cradled in her arms,
Rock'd with misfortune's deep and dire alarms;
Whose budding manhood saw him made the prey
Of cursed oppression's arbitrary sway,
Condemn'd by brutal violence to brave
The toils and dangers of the ocean wave—

Now, by his ardent, persevering mind,
And honest worth, with skill and sense combined,
Rising to honour, competence, and fame,
A wealthy station, and an envied name.
Deep in his inmost soul did Arthur feel
What still he strove by actions to reveal,
A thankfulness for benefits conferr'd,
Which warm'd his zeal and all his being stirr'd.
With unremitting ardour he applied
His time and skill, for nought he had beside
To business, its interest to promote—
He schemed, invented, calculated, wrote,
More for his honour'd partners—to repay
The debt he owed by all that in him lay.
And these endeavours met with full success,
Their trade increased—though seasons of distress
Disturb'd the nation, from the rough recoil
Of war's reaction on the British soil.
At home their wares were spread throughout the land,
Abroad they also met a fair demand,
And when 'twas thought a voyage might be made,
To carry further still their thriving trade,

Across the great Atlantic, Arthur went,
And many months with much advantage spent
At New York, Boston, Washington, and where
His mission led him: having time to spare,
And mixing freely, as a merchant may
Of name and skill, wherever through his stay
He chanced to be, with men of sense and worth,
Who look'd not to the accident of birth,
He left that country polish'd and improved,
Grateful for kindness shown where'er he moved,
And bearing with him the substantial proofs
Of pleasant profit drawn beneath their roofs.
In useful labours time flew swiftly by,
(With idlers only is it slow to fly)
And brought increasing fame and well-earned wealth;
Active and buoyant, with the glow of health,
In the full prime of manhood, fair and tall,
And growing rich: in high repute with all,
Who knew his worth, Arthur might now aspire
And lift his eyes, if such were his desire,
Among the merchants round, to choose a wife,
Who, disregarding all his former life,

Would gladly of their fairest daughters give
The choice to one who knew so well to live.
With scheming mothers, he was deem'd a prize,
Nor was he void of favour in the eyes,
The soft blue eyes, and orbs of flashing black,
That met him often, neither did he lack
The courteous, winning, soul-attracting smile,
The sweet low voice, and fascinating wile;
Choice gems of beauty, potent in their charms,
To lure a worthy husband to the arms
Of duteous daughters, train'd to play the dove,
Or fair ones form'd for loving and for love.—
He saw, and heard, and felt—he was not dead
To woman's worth, nor yet averse to wed.
For one sweet girl he in his inmost soul
Long nourish'd love, yet kept in due control
The restless guest, discouraged by the thought
That what he would must bend to what he ought.
When first he came, a wanderer and poor,
To Birmingham, as hath been said before,
Amelia Redmond, then just seventeen,
Was leaving school, where she for years had been.
An only child, her father's joy and pride,
No means were spared, and nothing left untried

To clothe her mind and person in a dress
Fitted to show their native loveliness;
And well she had repaid the care and toil
By the sweet products of a genial soil:
To native talent and a docile mind,
A gentle spirit, generous and kind,
She brought a keen endeavour to excel—
To aim at much, yet still to do it well:
Knowledge she sought not merely for display,
But that the mind inquiring led the way.
Slender—above the middle size, and yet not tall,
Her arching neck, and shoulders' graceful fall,
Gave dignity and grandeur to a mien,
In one so few of years but seldom seen.
Her fair locks cluster'd round a brow of snow,
And swept in wavy ringlets far below:
The dimpled cheeks soft blushing like the morn,
When aught aroused her sympathy or scorn;
The small, uncorner'd mouth, and underneath
The coral lips, the white enamell'd teeth:
This, with such eyes of deep ethereal blue,
Like heaven by starlight, or the violet's hue,
Now soft dissolving in a liquid light
Of tenderness—or animated– bright

With beams of joy, they laugh'd so merrily
That others twinkled in pure sympathy.
Need I do more to fill the portrait in?—
Describe her small, straight nose and rounded chin,
The pencill'd eyebrows, and the silken lash
Which temper'd by their length the brilliant flash,
And lent such softness to the downcast eye?
Ah, now 'tis done! What do I say? Oh, fie!
Put in the little foot, and slender hand,
Just fit to wield Titania's fairy wand,
And then you have my fair one at full length,
Her face and form, her weakness and her strength,
The very beau ideal of a lass
Most often found among that wealthy class
That fill the middle ranks, with whom no care
Nor want is found to mar a thing so fair,
And placed below that blight of dissipation,
The bane of hundreds in a higher station.
Accomplish'd, wealthy, lovely, too, and young,
She did not want for suitors, but the throng
Afforded none that struck her fancy much,
Or yet so slight the impress, that the touch

Faded away, nor left a trace behind,
Like summer clouds, or like the viewless wind.
In truth she was, if truth must needs be told,
Somewhat romantic: and the days of old,
Of stately courtesy and gallant deeds,
Of knights in arms, and maids in mourning weeds;
When chivalrous devotion to maintain
His lady's beauty, proud to wear her chain,
To champion forth the injured orphan's right,
Was valiant knighthood's war-cry in the fight—
The poetry of this her mind imbued,
Not the revolting portions, coarse and rude,
Of lawless outrage, tyranny and crime,
Which made the real features of the time.
There must be much of this or would there be
Scope for the exercise of chivalry?
To save from ill, there must be evil first,
And Ivanhoe by Front-de-bœuf be nurst:
In righting wrongs is much of nobleness,
But better far to have none to redress.
Though wanting not a man in steel complete
To come and lay his trophies at her feet,
In these our modern days, the polish'd tone
Of poetry had mark'd her for its own:

She sigh'd for one, as in that pleasant dream,
Worthy to love, to honour, and esteem,
Devoid of empty, frivolous pretence,
If not Ulysses, yet a man of sense.
'Twas not much marvel, then, her tiny hand,
At twenty-two, should still be in demand,
At least unpledged—her finger yet unbound,
And unencircled by the golden round—
Not deep in love, or what the turn oft serves,
When influenced by brain, and blood, and nerves,
No whit persuaded that her throbbing heart
Was made a sheath for Cupid's restless dart.
'Twas three years previous, when about nineteen,
That Arthur at her father's board was seen,
Before he was a partner, when his name
Was first becoming known to common fame:
Thenceforth, by Mr. Redmond's kindness, he
Was often there to dine, or take his tea,
Especially on Sundays, showing forth
He valued real, unassuming worth.
'Twas thus in scenes domestic he imbibed
Those feelings better cherish'd than described;
The first soft dawnings of that flaming day,
Ere passion sweeps the mental mists away,

To gaze into those eyes of liquid blue,
When bent upon you—looking kindly, too—
To listen to the soft bewitching sound
Of that sweet voice: and as it rings around
In silver tones, to join, with ready glee,
The joyous laugh—beware, 'tis witchery.
Amelia's manners were to Arthur kind
And courteous, as became her gentle mind;
She knew his story, and the honest *trait*
That first had thrown him in her father's way;
His skill and genius shining through neglect,
Gave him strong claims to honour and respect;
But this indeed was all: for as to love,
Her station seem'd at first so much above
His humble lot, the thought had never life,
Or such a dream, as being Arthur's wife.
But when with years his prospects blossom'd fair,
And he in wealth and honour might compare
With other men, and looking calmly round,
But few so wise and worthy might be found:
And further, when at still a later day,
Returning, polish'd, from his lengthen'd stay
Among our brethren resident across
The broad and deep Atlantic's teeming foss,

He came again, as introduced anew,
Another man, the past kept out of view;
So courteous and genteel, his honest hand
Might grace the best and noblest in the land:
Yes, then she thought, when marking his address,
His ease of manner, and his manliness,
Set off by modest sense, through which there shone
Rays of that genius which was all his own,
"How Arthur is improv'd! how better far
Than Thelwall, Herbert, Gray, or Gennys are;
How much superior to the common herd,
While talent may to folly be preferr'd!"
Yet still, though this comparison she drew,
To his advantage, there it rested too,
She could not go beyond, nor was it meet
For maidenly reserve to seem to greet
Or cast a lure, a lover to attract—
Woman to think is free, but man to act.
Besides, although a hero in his way,
Her class of heroes were of other clay.—
Perhaps if he, with mutely-speaking eye,
Instead of breathing forth the secret sigh,
Had boldly look'd his love, or spoke it out,
And placed the matter so beyond all doubt,

It might have kindled up an answering flame,
And made the fair Amelia take his name:
But worth and true love ever modest is,
And marriage comes as please the destinies;
So while "among the rest young Arthur bow'd,
But never talk'd of love," the very crowd
Of suitors thrust his humble claims aside,
Eclipsed by loud pretension's look of pride.
True that at times, for maidens' wits are keen,
And quick to see what men in secret mean,
Especially in their own province, "love,
Which rules the court, the city, and the grove,"
As some one says, but whom I now forget—
Amelia might suspect (though no coquette)
That Arthur was not quite insensible
To her bright eyes, though he dissembled well,
And slily smile, well pleased at heart to find
Her soft attractions lost not on mankind:
For where's the woman?—ay, just show me where
That is but only young, and passing fair,
That her good beauties, shorn of their effect,
Would see condemn'd to coldness and neglect.—
Among the foremost of the little band
Of candidates who sought to win her hand,

The first in her esteem was Randal Bray,
A fine young man, and somewhat in her way,
That is, one-third romantic, scribbled rhymes,
Talk'd of the glory of the olden times—
Quoted the bards of chivalry and song,
Who roused the brave to vindicate from wrong
The helpless and the weak: inspired the knight
To die or conquer, in defence of right:
Besides, he could be very useful, too,
In helping people who had nought to do;
He danced *à merveille*, sang a famous second,
And sketching might among his gifts be reckon'd,
Play'd cards, and touching airs upon the flute,
And could be almost anything—but mute.
Who could resist such charms? What heroine
Could such a hero ever fail to win?—
And yet Amelia was not quite subdued,
For some misgivings would at times intrude;
She saw him once, upon an April day,
Run from a little shower swift away,
While she stood gazing on heaven's radiant bow,
Spanning, with glorious hues, the scene below,
The chiefest form of beauty—child of light,
As fair as dreams, as transient and as bright.

Another time she saw him change his shoes
For walking in the dew:—and faint to lose
A little blood, which falling and alarm
Made requisite to borrow from his arm.
This made her draw comparisons with those
Of by-gone days, who in the midst of foes
Beset by danger in a hundred forms,
Laugh'd at the raving of the wildest storms
Who lay o' nights upon the bleak hill-side,
Couch'd on the heath, their glory and their pride
To train their iron frames to do and bear
What fate should will, and death for honour dare.
These were sad drawbacks, yet he stood, withal,
First in her favour, though that was but small,
Until those feelings were at length aroused
By one whom shortly after she espoused,
That quite extinguish'd every wayward thought,
And stirr'd those depths with which her soul was fraught.
It happen'd thus—upon a lovely day,
Balmy and soft, about the end of May,
A party had been form'd, on pleasure bent,
To change the parlour for the gipsy tent,

And while the breath of spring was in the air,
To seek the greenwood and to quaff it there:
Not that the most romantic had a wish
To feast alone on that chameleon's dish—
No! Pic-nics would not do without the cheer,
The chicken, ham and tongue, champagne and beer:
The latter I discard myself, because
I advocate the water-drinker's laws,
And hold that clear, pure element to be
More worth than seas of Burgundy to me:
But in those days the movement was unknown
Of temperance, contending for the throne
Of human reason, striving to redeem
Man's noble nature from the swinish steam
Of base debauch—Unknown the fervent pledge
Of abstinence—and therefore I allege
That wine was there, and porter, with a store
Of what I did enumerate before,
And standing pies, and cake, and bread and cheese,
That all might have enough of what they please.
Upon the grassy turf, beneath an oak
Whose spreading boughs the scorching sun-beams broke,

And form'd a pleasant canopy o'er-head—
The hampers were unpack'd, the cloth was spread.
In merry groups, expectant, gathered round
The joyous party, some upon the ground
Reclined at ease, beneath the cooling shade,
While rung their laugh along the verdant glade.
Others, more active, lent a ready aid
In carving for the rest, and none delay'd
To taste the bounteous feast, made doubly sweet,
As exercise gave appetite to eat;
Around from hand to hand the bumpers pass'd
And cunning smiles and merry looks were cast
From each to each, and as the spirits rose,
Gay repartée in wordy torrents flows;
Wit flashed and sparkled, and the very breeze
Was vocal, as it played among the trees.
At length, the meal was done, small parties rove
In straggling file along the shady grove,
Forming such groups as taste or feeling drew
To sympathy with many, or with few.
A tender couple *here* pursued their way,
Breathing such tales as suited genial May,
There rose the laugh from some gregarious herd,
Who noisy mirth to sentiment preferr'd,

Or, lacking for themselves a fitting mate,
With whom to hold a pleasant tête-a-tête,
Took refuge in a crowd which like a mart,
Contains in bulk the lacking counterpart.
An hour's stroll or two, and then they took
Their course along the borders of a brook,
Which ran across some meadows near the wood,
To reach the place where now the servants stood,
Waiting with horse and equipage at hand
The slow arrival of the loit'ring band.
Crossing the fields, some distance from the road,
Quite near a common labourer's abode,
In all the gay attire of summer drest,
White, green, and scarlet, too, among the rest,
The ladies look'd like butterflies, and drew
Unlook'd for notice by their gaudy hue.
When half across a field of largest size,
An object just behind them caught their eyes,
Or rather struck their ears—a bellowing sound,
Short, low, and tremulous—and looking round,
They spy a portly bull approaching near,
Whose movements now betoken'd cause for fear,
Slowly he came at first, with louring look,
Pawing the ground—and then his head he shook,

And lashing with his tail his brawny sides,
Came faster on with short uncertain strides.
Amelia, who was leaning on the arm
Of Randal Bray, showed symptoms of alarm,
And other ladies who were in the rear,
Betrayed by screams and hasty steps their fear.
Arthur was in advance, but turning round,
As struck upon his ears the hollow sound
Of rising rage emitted by the bull,
He saw he was of mischief seeming full,
And knowing well their habits from of yore,
That flight would but encourage him the more,
He called aloud to those who were behind
To stay their pace, if they would safety find,
And make a slow retreat—to show no fear,
But keep together should he still draw near;
Himself, and those around him, chanced to be
So close upon the outer boundary,
'Twas easy to escape; but thus to save
Himself, and leave his hapless friends to brave
The danger of the creature's goring horn,
His true and gallant nature thought foul scorn.
Besides, the secret idol of his soul,
She whom he valued far beyond the whole,

The fair Amelia, still so good and kind,
So bright and gentle, she too was behind;
And turning back, firm grasping in his hand
A walking-stick, he hoped to make a stand,
Assisted by the men, and thus to shield
The ladies while escaping from the field.
But ere he reached the scene, the bull had shown
Signs to what fearful height his rage had grown,
And spite of Arthur's caution, fear so shook
The nerves of all, that each with anxious look
Increased the pace, and when, with dreadful roar,
The bull pursued, still faster than before,
Oppress'd with fatal terror and dismay,
Both men and women fairly ran away.
The rout was now complete—his head depress'd,
The bull appeared to single from the rest
A flying nymph, whose purple mantle spread
In ample volume from behind her head.
Arthur had marked this chase, and calling out
To cast away the cloak, and face about,
Implored the men by name to aid him now
To intercept the bull, and told them how.
But all in vain, for every frightened elf,
Seemed only bent on shifting for himself.

Swiftly in every way the runners sped,
While terror lent them wings, and as they fled
'Mid frequent falls each struggled wildly on,
Thoughtless of other safety than their own.
Meanwhile the bull was gaining on the fair,
Whose shrieks arose and thrill'd along the air;
Nearer and nearer see—Oh God! she falls—
The raging beast shoots past her, and recalls
The curdling blood that stagnates round the heart
Of all who see, but dread to take her part:
But no! he turns, and roars with baffled rage,
Her purple cloak his fiery eyes engage;
He runs to gore her now!—Ah no! he's stayed
By Arthur rushing to Amelia's aid.
Oh! bravely done, he throws him in the way,
Tearing the mantle from her as she lay;
What does he mean? He takes it on his arm
And shakes it at the bull! See, see! the charm
Hath done its work to draw the bull aside
And glut on him its rage—with hasty stride
The bull ran at him now with lower'd head,
When instantly upon his horns he spread
The fatal cloak, and nimbly sprang behind,
Leaving the creature cumbered with the blind.

As quick as thought the bushy tail he seized,
And twisted round his left hand as he pleased,
While with his right he wields the oaken stick,
On ribs, and back, and legs, the blows fell thick;
The bull astonish'd, bellowed with the pain,
Tore up the ground, and rent the cloak in vain;
Then as the cudgel fell upon his hide,
He turned and twisted round from side to side,
To reach his stout assailant, but in vain,
A storm of buffets fell with might and main
On nose, and eyes, and ears—enraged to find
He could not reach his enemy behind,
Because he pull'd him after him around,
He started off and tore along the ground.
But no, it would not do, he dragg'd his foe
Close at his heels, and whether fast or slow,
Down came the stick upon him as he went,
For Arthur's strength of arm was not soon spent:
Then, stopping short, he once more tried to gore,
But reached him now no better than before,
And got so much of punishment instead,
As madden'd him with equal rage and dread.
Arthur had tried to plant some heavy blows,
As erst he turned, upon his eyes and nose,

With such effect, that he was almost blind,
Besides the soreness which he felt behind.
The contest now was wonderful to see,
The furious bull obliged in turn to flee,
Dragging along his pertinacious foe,
Still planting as he could a heavy blow,
Or as the speed increased, with trailing feet,
Haul'd like a log along in swift retreat.
Those who upon the hedge in safety stood,
Were watching with intensely anxious mood
And beating heart, to see how this would end,
But none came down to help their gallant friend.
Once, when the two had struggled far away
From where Amelia still unconscious lay,
Two of the party ventured in to aid
And bear away the fair and hapless maid
At Arthur's call, as swift he pass'd them by;
But ere they reached the place where she did lie,
A sudden turn of Arthur's tandem leader,
A rush and bellow, and they failed to heed her,
And scamper'd for their lives; convinced at heart
Discretion was stout valour's better part.
Again the bull essayed, without avail,
Just like a kitten, coursing of its tail,

To reach and gore him—round and round he went,
While Arthur plied the stick till almost spent.
They both were now exhausted with the fray,
And when he turned once more to flee away,
After a few yards drag and parting blow,
He fairly loosed his hold, and let him go.
Onward he gallop'd, fleeter than the wind,
Nor stay'd to cast one frighten'd look behind,
While Arthur fell, and for a minute lay
To fetch his breath, then rose, and ran away,
To lift the maiden gently in his arms,
And bear her off secure from more alarms.
Great was the joy that burst from every tongue,
As with his lovely burthen, in the throng
He stood, without the field in safety now,
The perspiration on his manly brow,
And face flush'd with exertion, while his eyes
Beam'd with the fire of chivalrous emprise.
Amelia's female friends full soon contrive
Her consciousness and spirits to revive.
Restored to life, they find with great delight,
She had escaped with nothing but the fright,
No wound or bruise, but that severe alarm
Had render'd needful, bleeding in the arm,

Which a young surgeon did—the party then
Return'd with expedition home again.
Though matters thus had ended for the best,
The men appeared crest-fallen and depress'd,
The ladies silent—all appeared to think
That Arthur only snatched them from the brink
Of awful death; and but for him alone,
Destruction had o'ertaken more than one,
For certain else a dear and valued friend,
Had prematurely met a fearful end.
Her intimates conveyed her home the first,
Then left her to repose—the rest dispersed.
Next day the tale was whisper'd far and near,
With full details to every list'ning ear,
And Birmingham with Arthur's prowess rung,
The theme of praise by each admiring tongue.
For near a week Amelia kept her room,
The shock had much unhinged her, but the gloom
Of sickness was by loving friends assuaged,
Who vied to keep her pleasantly engaged.
Her young companions told at her request,
After a little interval of rest,
What had occurred when she had swooned away,—
How Arthur rushed before her as she lay,

Painted his gallant bearing, and the scene,
Him and his fierce antagonist between,
In glowing terms; each minute part rehearsed,
Once and again, repeated from the first,
She heard and dwelt upon with secret joy,
And often did this theme her thoughts employ
When left alone; she ponder'd with delight,
On the chivalric spirit of her knight,
For so she dubb'd him; of his manly sense,
True wit and gallantry, without pretence,
Contrasted him full length with Randal Bray,
Whose love and valour made him—run away.
Indeed, the latter had sustain'd a fall
In her esteem, that if she thought at all
Of him, it was with feelings near allied
To what would not be soothing to his pride.
The slender place he held in her esteem,
Had vanish'd like the fabric of a dream,
And left no trace behind, but some regret,
That in forgiving, she could not forget.
During her short seclusion, she had space
The looks, and words, and actions, to retrace
Of Arthur and herself, for two years past,
Forgetting not the greatest and the last;

From these she drew the pleasing, soothing, thought,
That he had not risk'd life and limb for nought,
And though, perhaps, his native courage would
Have urged him on to run, for others' good,
An equal peril—yet without that spur
That made him gladly dare the worst for her.
And this contented her, because it showed
That those high deeds at which her spirit glowed,
Might still be wrought, and with a trumpet blast,
Proclaim'd the age of chivalry not past—
That generous and loyal hearts exist,
Though mail and pennon, spear, and plume be miss'd.
There is no little danger for the maid,
(Who hath received some well-directed aid
In time of peril,) from her own kind heart,
When gratitude concurs to take the part
Of her preserver, and to pave the way,
For love to follow at no distant day;
And thus Amelia, while her mind portray'd
Her recent danger, and the ready aid,
From dwelling on the action, soon began
To think with equal pleasure on the man.

The weak require protection from the strong—
For this the fair at times inflict a wrong
Upon the poor civilian—pass him by,
To look with favour and approving eye,
Upon the coat of scarlet, or deep blue:—
Is it because the gay and gaudy hue
Of outward dress attracts them by its show?
I must defend them there, and answer, "No!"
It is the instinct of the weak to cling,
As will the ivy round the forest king,
And therefore will the gentlest woman twine
Her fondest love, like tendrils of the vine,
Around the man whose hardy frame hath stood
The fierce extremes of winter's freezing mood,
Amid the polar snows, and gasp'd for breath
Where broiling suns spread pestilence and death,
Whose firm, unyielding soul hath stood unmoved
Amid the clash of armies, which but proved
That self-reliance in itself secure,
What it cannot control, it will endure.
Yes, woman's weakness seeks to be allied
With fearless strength, and dwells, with tender pride,

Upon the glory of the hero's name,—
The great reward and worshipper of fame,
Whose smiles incite and nerve the warrior's arm,
And to the triumph lends the greatest charm:
Doth, then, her gentle nature not abhor
The dreadful scenes of brutalizing war?
Yes! did these horrors pass before their eyes,
The mangled slain, the wounded soldiers' cries,
As parch'd with thirst he lies upon the ground,
His life-blood welling forth from every wound;
Or did the orphan's tear, the widow's moan,
The blacken'd fields, the ruin'd peasant's groan,
The towns destroy'd, and harvests swept away,
Or cities to the soldiers' lust a prey,
Arise in stern perspective, it would wring
Their inmost souls with anguish; but they bring
These very facts, if dimly shadow'd forth,
To estimate and prove the soldier's worth,
Whose prowess can withstand the hostile state,
And save and *shelter her* from such a fate.—
An early day did Mr. Redmond take
To render Arthur, for his daughter's sake,
His deepest, warmest thanks: "Oh, happy hour,"
He cried, "when, shunning arbitrary power,

You sought this place! what owe I not to you—
Wealth, honour, rank, and now my daughter, too:
The latter lost, the first indeed were vain,
Your gallantry hath saved me from that pain,
And kept the few remaining years I have
From sinking down, in sorrow, to the grave:
What can I offer, in exchange for life,
Except you take Amelia for a wife?"
A brilliant flash from Arthur's eye shot forth,
"And say you so?" he cried; "oh, that were worth
A monarch's ransom! To possess that hand
I'd hazard life and all I can command,
But that is not for me," he softly sigh'd:—
"Nay, have that from herself," the other cried;
"You know the adage, 'Faint heart never won
Fair lady yet;' full half the work is done
In your behoof: what woman could refuse
A man but lately found of so much use?
If not averse yourself, but pluck up heart,
And I predict success upon your part.
What! shall a man whose courage did not fail
To seize a bull (not by the horns but tail)
Before the meek eyes of a maiden quail?"

Then with a kindly pressure of the hand,
" Try her, my friend—what weight I can command
To guide her choice, shall labour on your side,
I'd rather see her Arthur Mervyn's bride
Than married to a prince: so now, adieu,
And full success attend your interview."
Encouraged by her father's cheering tone,
Arthur resolved, when next with her alone,
To hazard an avowal—then a thought
Flash'd on his mind, " 'twill look as if I sought
To take advantage of the little good
I render'd her to tax her gratitude."
To seem to use a plea, by deed or word,
Of, " This I claim for benefits conferr'd,"
He shrank from, with a generous disdain,
Scorning to profit by another's pain.—
During the week Amelia kept confined,
Doubts, hopes, and fears by turns perplex'd his mind,
Such as a lover only can possess,
When love's misgivings on his fancy press;
Merit is modest, coxcombs only cry
With vain presumption, " let them look and die."

Meantime, his keen solicitude was shown
By due inquiries till her health had grown
So much establish'd that the ruddy glow
Again appear'd beneath her skin of snow.
Then with a message, that she fain would see
Her brave preserver, by whose gallantry
Life, with its pleasing, anxious cares and joys,
Like precious gold, attemper'd with alloys,
Was still possess'd—Amelia sought to pay
Her early grateful tribute where it lay—
With beating hearts, and all that vague sensation
Produced by strong though latent agitation,
They met, alone—a blush was on her cheek
Which pass'd away, for as she strove to speak,
Emotion, weakness, from her recent fears,
O'ercame her so, that words were lost in tears.
Arthur himself, almost too moved to stand,
Sprang forward now, and gently took her hand;
With soothing words he sought to stem the course
Of that emotion which with so much force
Had overflow'd in tears, that bringing ease,
Her low-fetch'd sobs subsided by degrees:
Wiping, at length, her moist yet charming eyes,
"Pardon," she faintly cried, "this slight surprise.

My weakness overcame me ere I knew
How sadly childish I must seem to you."
Then faintly smiling, "This is not the way
My meed of deep-felt gratitude to pay,
And thank my brave preserver for a life
Snatch'd from destruction by a fearful strife,
Endangering his own—yet not the less
I deeply feel what feebly I express."—
"Nay, do not speak of gratitude or debt,
Talk of yourself—I fear you suffer yet;
The languid paleness of your face betrays
Too many traces of the last few days:
But soon, I trust, your anxious friends may seek
And find, the bloom of health upon that cheek."
"Thank you," she cried; "I feel recover'd now,
For having 'scaped all wounds, (I scarce know how,
For sure I felt his hot breath on my neck,
So close he was,) there's nothing more to check
My speedy getting well, which only fright
And its effects delay'd beyond one night:
That life, and limbs uninjured, I possess,
Is owing to your courage and address,

Such skill to plan and daring to effect
Provokes my wonder, and excites respect."
" Nay, lady, now you flatter me outright,
My service, though successful, was but slight,
The risk I ran is equall'd every day
By thousands in the world for little pay:
I should indeed feel shame if I could stand
And tamely see, without a helping hand,
Another's danger—what for you I tried
I must have done for any one beside."—
" My vanity," she utter'd, in reply,
And looking down with half a smile and sigh,
" Is not so great, a moment to infer
That you would not an equal risk incur
For any one in peril as for me,
And must, perforce, admire your chivalry."—
" Nay, madam, now you wrong me," Arthur cried;
" To save your life I would myself have died:
I spoke my meaning ill—but meant to say,
Quite the reverse of what your words convey:
I would—I wish,"—he here became confused—
While looking up, Amelia, half amused,
Replied, with archness, " Well, my friend, I know
You don't intend to deal my pride a blow,

When you the noble principle express,
A beggar would not claim your efforts less:
Such sentiments excite more joy than grief,
Although one likes to think oneself the chief."
"Ah, lady, you are jesting—could you read
The hidden springs and motives of the deed,
I fear you would not think me quite so free
From selfish feelings in my sympathy."
Then speaking hurriedly, with kindling eyes,
"Miss Redmond may repress, but wont despise
My deep presumption, when I now declare
My secret heart, and lay its feelings bare.
I love you deeply, truly—years have pass'd,
And each hath left it stronger than the last.
I've seen you circled by the young and gay,
And sighing, fear'd to see you borne away:
I dared not venture to contest the prize,
And boldly seek for favour in your eyes;
What claims had one so humble to aspire,
And seek the daughter of your honour'd sire,
My friend and benefactor, to whose grace
I owe my past success and present place.
Humility and dread of doing wrong
Repress'd my passion and seal'd up my tongue—

I have not ventured thus at length to speak,
Without assurance that I do not break
My duty to your father, nor repay
His confidence with base return this day;
With his approval arm'd, I thus presume
To gather from your lips my future doom:
If aught on my part, throughout after-life,
Would reconcile you to become my wife,
Or might I dare to hope that time will bring
Success upon its slow advancing wing,
I am content to wait, and serve the while,
To win your favour and approving smile.
Forgive me, lady, if I am too bold,
My tale is done, my fears and wishes told:
Unhappy may I be if you reject,
Yet still, I trust, deserving of respect."
With much emotion, lifting up her eyes,
Amelia said, " Nor anger nor surprise
Disturb my soul; no woman ever can
Feel, at the homage of a worthy man,
Other than deep respect and grateful pride,—
To be selected from the world, beside
So flattering a tribute to receive
Of confidence unbounded, cannot grieve

The spirit of the proudest: I regret
You speak as if you feared I could forget
The recent in the present—though I say
The highest compliment a man can pay
A lady's pride, cannot provoke disdain
Were she an empress; saving that the swain
Should merely rank, or wealth, or station woo,
Which I will not suppose the case with you."
"You do me only justice," Arthur cried,
"But may I hope that you will not decide
Against my suit, ambitious though it be,—
Oh! bid me not despair that constancy
May win you to consent; you do not speak,
But turn away to hide your heighten'd cheek;
I tremble with excitement—do I err
In pressing rudely what you can't confer?
If I offend in urging what I seek,
Breathe but a wish, and though my heart should break,
I will desist nor persecute again,
Or wait till better days your favour to obtain."
As soon as soft confusion left her nerve,
To overcome the maidenly reserve,

Contending with that frank and better part,
A noble nature speaking from the heart,
She turn'd, and with a soft, bewitching, smile,
Replied in words and accents void of guile—
"Ungrateful should I be, and insincere,
To wear the mask of semblance, and appear
Cold or disdainful of your offer'd love;
Let me, all silly coquetry above,
The pride and pleasure that I feel confess,
In being made the object of address,
From one whom I both honour and esteem.
Here is my hand; if henceforth you should deem
It worth possessing—at some future day
Claim it as yours, I will not answer nay."
A throb of pleasure thrill'd through Arthur's veins,
Joy seized his heart, and tingled in his reins,
Catching her in his arms, a burning kiss
Express'd the essence of tumultuous bliss.
Then did she gently strive with crimson'd face,
To disengage herself from his embrace,
And wear again a dignified repose,
Which kisses somehow ruffle: Cupid knows
'Tis sweet to press a ripe and ruby lip,
To taste its freshness, and its fragrance sip,

To draw the balmy breath, which from surprise
Is fluttering like love's ecstatic sighs,
Most rich and racy, being stolen bliss—
But (Dian aid me!) following a kiss,
Each looks so silly and so out of place,
As robs the pleasure of all sign of grace.
With all the joyous fervour of his heart,
And words that only love can e'er impart,
Arthur now breathed in fair Amelia's ear,
Those pleasing tales to tender lovers dear.
In three months from that time with manly pride,
Arthur received his fair and blushing bride,
And as he pressed her to his heaving breast,
He looked and felt at once completely blest.—
Bright smiled the morn that soft September day,
When friends and guests with wedding favours gay,
Surround the bridegroom and the blushing fair,
Whom all pronounce a well-assorted pair,
She blooming like a rosebud, rich and young,
And softly pure as ever poet sung,
He, manly, strong, and brave, whose own right hand,
Had won him fame and fortune in the land,
By worth ennobled on Queen Nature's plan,
Her noblest peer, a truly honest man.

LONDON:

AND OTHER POEMS.

LONDON.

I.

Great city of contrasts, proud queen of the nations!
The centre of commerce, of arts, and renown:
The force of whose power and splendour occasions
The far-distant east and the west to bow down:
And on thy rich altar to offer oblations,
The spoils of their provinces decking thee round,
The thought of thy vastness produces sensations
Overwhelmingly pleasing, yet sadly profound:
I think of mighty Babylon, and Nineveh's sad end,
And dread lest such another fate may over thee impend.

II.

Thy giant-like bulk still extends its proportions,
The marks of its progress appear on all sides:

From the walls of old London, those puny abortions
Of Romans or Normans, how vast are thy strides:—
On the banks of the Thames, and its slimy contortions,
Where proudly, securely, thy merchant fleet rides,
Of yore wert thou huddled—thy wealthiest portions
Look'd on its stream and were wash'd by its tides.
So once of old the Royal Tyre look'd from her city rock,
Nor dreamt of ruin's earthquake near till whelm'd beneath the shock.

III.

Now northward, and southward, and eastward, and west,
Like a vast inundation o'erflowing the land,
Still onward and onward, scarce pausing to rest,
Thy bulk thou advancest in majesty grand—
Say, when wilt thou cease the soft glades to molest,

Which, tranquil and rural once, far from the brand
Of the smoke of thy chimneys, were sweetly impress'd
With the footsteps of God, not man's puny hand?
Oh! stay thy brickfield-building march, nor with thy outworks rude,
On scenes to contemplation dear, unhallowed dare intrude.

IV.

Oh! couldst thou but speak of thy people of old—
What scenes thou hast witness'd of glory and crime—
Could the shades of past ages their secrets unfold,
For ever now lost in the dark gulf of time!
If all the misdeeds thou hast look'd on were told
To the wond'ring earth, in plain prose or rhyme,
From the days when the wild aborigines prowl'd
In the forests around thee, till now in thy prime,
Methinks 'twould be a thrilling tale of spirit-stirring force,
Of glorious deeds, and vice, and shame, light, darkness, and remorse.

V.

Though much is forgotten, yet famous in story,
Preserved in thy legends, and history's page—
On tablets inscribed in the temple of glory,
Or cursed in tradition by each rolling age—
(Thus ranging themselves under such category
As suits their complexion on life's busy stage,)
Enough remains known, yet, if marshall'd before ye,
To kindle soft pity or stimulate rage:
For spirits cast in gentle mould will weep at human woes,
While others, made of sterner stuff, a fiercer mind disclose.

VI.

But we need not retrace thy eventful career,
Nor single out cases of sorrow or pride,
Of gallant achievements or cowardly fear,
In those who fled basely or daringly died.
No! though they continue deservedly dear,
Let Walworth and Whittington rest side by side,
Nor yet need old Falstaff or Guy Fawkes appear,
The young Lady Jane, or Harry's fair bride:

The tortured Jews now freed from thrall, and
Smithfield's martyrs pure,
May with their tyrants rest in peace, from further
ills secure.

VII.

The present alone, the identical now,
Is more than sufficient our thoughts to engage;
Thy varying aspects may justly allow
Such scope for the fancy in this passing age,
That were but the weight of it stampt on the brow
Of what is enacted within thy broad stage,
The mightiest intellect prostrate must bow,
And cease with thee contest unequal to wage.
The mind of man too weak to grasp thy magnitude
sublime,
Would like Semele, scorch and burn, a mark to
future time.

VIII.

When we contemplate size independent of
beauty,
As the sculptured remains of old Egypt present,
In its sphinxes and pyramids coarse form'd and
sooty,

The produce of art in its early advent.
Or the measureless solitudes shrubless and grooty,
The home of the ostrich,—the Bedouin's tent,—
Preferr'd to that Araby, luscious and fruity,
By nomads, disdaining in towns to be pent;
The soul with awe imprest surveys the desert's boundless space,
And in the grandeur of the sphynx forgets ideal grace.

IX.

'Tis thus that thy masses of dense population,
Thy thousands on thousands of occupied homes,
Survey'd from th' advantage of some elevation,
From whence may be seen columns, steeples, and domes,
And streets like the web of a spider—sensation
Itself seems suspended, till over us comes
A touch of such sadness—profound isolation,
As the living might feel in a city of tombs.
We think what minute atoms we, what slight relation bear,
In hope or fear, and love or hate, to all the myriads there.

X.

The varied pulsations of that mighty heart,
Are the mingled conditions, hopes, prospects, and fears,
Of its million of units, in workshop or mart,
In palace or hovel, from porters and peers.
The fair one who plays in the ball-room her part,
And the wretch doom'd to eat her bread moisten'd with tears—
The wealthy, preserved from adversity's dart,
And misery's offspring whom poverty sears:
All these combined, compose the stream that throbs within its veins,
Can such a healthful current be so mixt with human pains?

XI.

The contact of splendour, with filth and decay,
The temples of mammon, religion, and vice,
The trappings and gorging of lord mayor's day,
And the wretches whom offal and rags must suffice,

With churches and theatres placed on half-pay,
And gin temples glitt'ring, weak fools to entice.
Luxurious club-houses where gentlemen play,
And hells where they rob you by sharpers and dice.
All this must strike th' observer's mind where'er he turns his eyes,
And fill his soul with mingled pride, shame, sorrow, and surprise.

XII.

Oh, who would suppose in this luminous age,
In a city renowned for its civilization,
Its arts and refinement—that grave men should wage
A war 'gainst the progress of self-reformation?
And clad in the tinsel befitting the stage,
In mountebank costume assuming their station
In front of a glass and gilt gingerbread cage,
Make fools of themselves in the eyes of the nation.
With men in iron, brass, and steel—the seignors in furred gowns,
Should sink their magisterial weight, by acting licensed clowns.

XIII.

How much, too, such spectacles draw the attention
Of thousands of gazers, rich vulgar, and poor,
Who rush from each alley, street, suburb—their *penchant*
For sight-seeing, fed by the multiplied store;
While cash-making shop-keepers tax their invention
To extract from their windows and balconies more,
Than the house front is worth, as, with great condescension,
They charge you a guinea, and payment before,
For room to stand and see the queen, perched on the elevation,
Or lord mayor's fool, or any fool who fills a lofty station.

XIV.

Within thy circumference much may be found
Conducive to human improvement and weal;
Is any one injured—there's balm for the wound

In hospitals founded diseases to heal;
And those who have suffer'd in life's weary round,
In charity's bosom their woes may conceal.
There are schools for the orphan—thrice holy the ground
Devoted to objects man's woes to ancle.
More blest the tear from pity's eye, that falls for human grief,
Than victims slain for sacrifice where brethren want relief.

XV.

But, alas, there is much to excite our regret
Of awful pollution of body and mind!
The sad degradation continually met
In thy darker retreats from the dregs of mankind,
Our senses appal—while the ears are beset
With curses and blasphemy, aptly design'd
To strike us with loathing—nay, almost to let
Our efforts subside for redeeming mankind.
The moral darkness seems so gross, so dim the mental ray,
That faith and hope in virtue's cause alone uphold the day.

XVI.

Oh, little think many who walk thy broad ways,
Or roll in a carriage through street, park, or square,
Where objects of splendour alone meet the gaze,
And all seems luxurious, attractive, and fair—
That within some dark court, or the tortuous maze
Of some gloomy passage quite near them, does care
And famine reside, where hope's golden rays
Are quench'd in the darkness of vice and despair.
And foul disease and rottenness from every nameless cause,
Sit reaping there the sure reward of nature's outraged laws.

XVII.

And little considers the fair one, bedeck'd
In satins and velvets of graceful design,
How the health of her young countrywomen is wreck'd
In thousands of cases to aid her to shine.
That toilworn, exhausted, the child of neglect
With whose chaplet of thorns no roses entwine,

O'er her splendid apparel the sad tear hath
check'd
As she sat the long night to complete it in time.
The bitter contrast of her fate, condemn'd to
wasting toil,
For unremunerating pay to burn the midnight oil.

XVIII.

In a place so extensive there needs will be found
Extremes of all natures, and every degree,
From the prison, the jail, the cave underground,
To the home of the happy, the joyous, the free.
The palace of princes where comforts abound,
The chambers of lawyers unbless'd with a fee,
Disconsolate, bare, up the loftiest round
Where poets inhabit by custom's decree.
And squares and parks, museums, docks, tall
columns, statues grim,
In strong contrast with lazaretts, suburban villas
trim.

XIX.

Did the genius of Britain essay to possess
Reports of her chief town, by sending out spies
Commission'd to ascertain whether distress

Or pleasure, prevailed in her highways and byes,
With spirits to aid and afford them access,
Like the genii of eastern and sunnier skies.
In order to minister future redress,
The conflict of statements would cause her surprise,
With each a district to survey, one portion would possess
Intrinsic features which would give its own peculiar dress.

XX.

If one were set down in the midst of the city,
Where countless, unceasing, like bees from a hive,
The busy inhabitants, grave, gay, or witty,
Are thrusting along, while each street seems alive
With cars, wagons, carts, chaises, quick stepping feet, he
While stunn'd with the discord can scarcely contrive
To escape running down, each holds it a pity
A moment to lose in his efforts to thrive.

The gorgeous shops, the costly goods, and marks
of wealth around,
No idleness or poverty would speak could here
be found.

XXI.

Another despatch'd to the squares of the west,
The chosen retreats of the wealthy and proud;
No trading is here, and no one seems prest
Or hurried for time—no wagons, no crowd;
In respectable dulness each mansion is drest,
('Tis the vulgar alone who are busy and loud)
A decorous languor around seems to rest
Unbroken—except on the night of a rout.
Then shouts and curses, flashing lights and noise
of wheels declare,
That some great man's that night 'at home,' at
somewhere in the square.

XXII.

Send a third to the haunts of the wretched and
poor,
The hovels and dens of misfortune and vice,
Where the demon of poverty glares from each
door,

And thousand o' mornings scarce know when
they rise
Where their breakfast will meet them: and
ragged and sore,
Corrupted, diseased, a harbour for lice,
In filth and brutality squander that store,
So meagre at best, in low drinking and dice,
And squalor, oaths and noisome smells, want,
misery, and crime
Would tincture his report with all the evils of the
time.

XXIII.

One feature in London, with pleasing surprise,
Will strike the observer wherever he turns:
The number of buildings still meeting his eyes,
From inscriptions on which he wondering learns
That on *casual donations* each safely relies
For the means of relieving the spirit that mourns,
Or aiding where fallen humanity tries
To regain that position for which the heart yearns;
This glorious fact pleads strongly for the *voluntary*
cause,
And that religion wants no aid from state-enacted
laws.

XXIV.

He who hath encounter'd the force of a crowd,
A genuine compound of cockneyland life:
Hath witness'd its impulses eager and loud,
Its humour, vagaries, contention, and strife:
Now forward, now backward, to right or left bow'd,
One cries on his children, and one on his wife,
With ribs sore—and tatter'd, hath probably vow'd
To avoid such a thing for the rest of his life.
The many-headed monster's strength is felt for many a day,
You bless your fate if arms and legs are safely brought away.

XXV.

When we speak of great cities, their grandeur and glory,
Our words are of palaces, temples, and towers:
Their monuments, fountains, in thought are before ye,
Casting up to the heavens their soft, cooling showers,

Thus, Memphis, Damascus, Rome—famous in story—
Remind us of catacombs, columns, and bowers:
While many more modern with which tourists bore ye,
In gardens and fountains are far before ours.
Those pleasant shades and cooling streams beneath a burning sky,
Rich in their sculptured ornaments, are grateful to the eye.

XXVI.

But brought as a test of a nation's advance,
Great London will prove to be far in the van,
Superior to Italy, Spain, ay, or France,
For they have left off just where Britain began;
We need not to squares or to aqueducts dance,
For water is brought to the home of each man:
Would the barbarous splendour our comforts enhance,
If we gave up our own and adopted their plan?
No spouting Tritons, mermaids, shells, as civilized indices,
Are far behind our homely plan as Bagdad now to Nice is.

XXVII.

Magnificent, too, is the system of drains,
Exceeding the far-spoken wonders of old:
So lengthen'd and vast in its branches and chains,
That labyrinths pass like a tale that is told:
The sewers gigantic, like multiplied veins,
Beneath the whole city their windings unfold,
Disgorging the source of plagues, scourges, and pains,
Which visit those cities to cleanliness cold.
Well did the ancient proverb lay down this important text,
That cleanliness for human weal to Godliness is next.

XXVIII.

But, alas! there is one thing—a stain and a blot,
Disgraceful, unhealthy, disgusting, and foul,
Repugnant to reason, offensive to thought,
Revolting and shocking to body and soul:
The *grave-yards*, where common humanity's lot
Decrees that the stream of all living must roll,
Though they "lie in obstruction," yet scarcely can rot
In the maw of this flesh-glutted ravenous ghoule;

'Twas once a hallow'd sacred spot of calm and tranquil rest,
Where ceased the weary one to toil, the wicked to molest.

XXIX.

Yet surely this nation, so great and so wise,
In arts, and refinement, and science so grand,
Will never permit beneath their own eyes,
An evil so baleful, pernicious, to stand:
No! let them in might and in majesty rise
Through the length and breadth of their dear native land,
And join, one and all, to purge these foul sties,
By reason, by union—with head, heart, and hand.
For health, for decency, for all that's sacred to men's minds,
Thrust from your towns those reeking pests which taint the viewless winds.

XXX.

Then let me conclude, for I cannot exhaust
The themes to dilate on (so boundless a range,)
The mind in amazement and wonder is lost

At the multiplied objects so various and strange:
May thy people love justice, at whatever cost,
Improve and be happy, not restless for change,
May their honest expectancies never be cross'd,
And never do aught a just God may avenge!
Thus may this town, so wonderful, so wealthy, and so vast,
Continue flourishing and free while time and nature last.

THE HOMES OF THE POOR.

The halls of merry England
  Stand fair upon the plain,
Her lordly castles crown the steep,
  Her vessels crowd the main:
There are palaces for princes,
  And villas fair to see,
Brave homes for nobles, merchants; but
  The poor man—where dwells he?

Come, walk into St. Giles's,
  And up that narrow street;
This dirty winding stair conducts
  To poverty's retreat:

The grey light of the morning
Is breaking through the air,
But from the steams upon the glass,
It scarce can enter there.

Ay! take your scent of millefleurs,
Or sal volatile,
(You need it in this crowded room.)
Now tell me what you see!
Nine human beings herding
Within this little den,
Of diff'rent ages, sex, and name—
Boys, women, girls, and men.

That large bed, in the corner,
Contains the married pair,
Besides two infant children,
Who occupy a share:
The eldest son and lodger
Another bed enjoy;
The third contains a grown-up girl,
Her sister, and a boy.

You think this an exception,
  But go from door to door,
And you will find it common in
  The dwellings of the poor:
It is not of the pariahs,
  The worthless, and the base,
Whom idleness and vice have made
  The outcasts of their race,—

But the artisans of England,
  Of industry and skill,
Her honest peasants, whose hard toil
  Our barns and ware-rooms fill—
The men whose glorious labours,
  A casket set with gems,
A palace-home for liberty,
  Is rearing on the Thames!

The men whose skilful fingers
  Have wove the monarch's vest,
And from the loom the robe produced,
  In which the Queen is dress'd:

That gorgeous vase who moulded
In classic form so pure,
Which glitters on the ducal board,—
This grievous wrong endure.

Oh! shame to Christian England,
That bought at such a price
The freedom of the injured slave
To European vice:
Oh! shame to Christian teachers,
To traverse *distant* shores,
Whilst they neglect the misery
That's at their very doors!

In vain you build cathedrals,
Rear steeples to the sky,
Concern yourselves about the souls
Of people when they die:
Instead of church extension,
Extend their living home;
At least, permit the *present* world
To *share* with that to come.

Would ye gather grapes from thistles,
Or figs upon the sloe?
Expect that aught of purity
Can from such sources flow?
Where the barriers of modesty
Are trampled in the dust,
And all is there that can provoke
Brutality and lust.

Oh! the happy homes of England,
They are not for the poor,
The household gods find no repose
Within his wretched door:
The fierce wolf of the forest
Hath to *himself* a den,
The foxes holes, the bird a nest,
Why not the sons of men?

Rouse up, ye English patriots,
And men of Christian mould!
Proclaim, as with a trumpet blast,
What rulers should be told—

There's something rotten in the state,
When men who win their bread
Live hard, work hard, die, and have not
Room, alive or dead.

The children of the wealthy
Are nursed with anxious care,
Rich silks and velvets wrap those limbs
So delicately fair;
The balmy airs of heaven,
When redolent of spring,
Dare not, unlicensed, breathe upon
The offspring of a king.

The poor man's squalid children
Are turned adrift to roam,
In hunger, rags, and dirt, because
There is not space at home:
The streets supply them schooling
If they to learn incline,
Swearing, lying, theft, by day,
At night to herd like swine.

Ay! build your model prisons
  And houses of correction,
Pass penal laws, transport, and hang
  To keep them in subjection:
One Sunday or *one* ragged school,
  And fitting homes will do,
More than Old Baileys by the score,
  And all their terrors too.

EVENING.

How lovely is the twilight hour,
When village bells are ringing,
And hawthorn buds, and woodbines wild
Are dewy odours flinging!

The scorching noontide heat is past,
And o'er the senses stealing,
The mellow, light, and balmy breeze
Comes with delicious feeling.

The beetle's swift and drony flight,
The cattle's distant lowing,
The music of the rippling stream
O'er golden pebbles flowing;

The whisper of the summer gale
Through the forest lightly roaming,
Falls softly with the cuckoo's note
To usher in the gloaming.

And now the light and subtle dew
In ambient æther floating,
Gently distils in sparkling drops
Each fragrant wild flower coating.

The red rose bends her radiant head,
The balmy freshness drinking,
And modest buds unfold their sweets,
From day's bright glitter shrinking.

Now richly on the glowing eve
The glorious sun descending,
Leaves a bright track of golden light
In purple streamlets ending.

Delicious smells the new mown grass,
The conscious zephyr tainting,
And list the strains from yonder grove,
The nightingale lamenting!

Hark! now its rich and thrilling voice
In melody is gushing,
Now tremulous and wailingly
Its liquid notes are rushing.

Yes! lovely is the evening hour,
When fairy bells are ringing,
And the glow-worm lights its lustrous lamp,
While the nightingale is singing!

THE GROANS OF THE BRITONS.

"We know not even which way to flee. Chased by the barbarians to the sea, and forced back by the sea upon the barbarians, we have only the choice of two deaths: for we must either perish by the sword, or be swallowed up by the waves."

LETTER TO AËTIUS.

SEE! the valiant Britons stand
In firm array upon the strand,
To guard, with dauntless hearts, their native land;
No iron armour girds their frame,
But stalwart limbs and souls of flame
Are found amid that naked, grisly band.
Onward come the men of blood,
Riding proudly o'er the flood,
Their shields and helmets flashing in the sun,
Daring courage, strength, and skill,
Mighty in unyielding will,
Taught them how fields alone were fought and won.

Firm as their native oak, when tempests roar,
The Britons gather on the rock-bound shore,
By force their proud invaders to repel:
The Roman name
Nor Cæsar's fame
Suffice their free-born souls with fear to quell;
The fire of independence glow'd in every martial frame
To live as freemen still, or die upon the field of fame.
Uprose their wild, terrific cry,
As swept the Roman galleys by,
Then mounting to their chariots, race
To meet them at the landing place.

Hail! goddess bright and fair,
Nymph of the golden hair,
With robes of light—enchanting Liberty!
Nature, smiling at thy birth,
Stamp'd thee friend of human worth,
Nurse of heroic deeds and constancy:
By thee impell'd, the naked savage runs
On hostile spears—his brawny bosom shuns
No form of death—his cry is victory!—

The Roman banners are unfurl'd,
And shall the rulers of the world,
Though shouting thousands hostile crowd the steep,
With prows inverted, stand to sea,
Inglorious, leave the land and flee,
And speed their course for safety o'er the deep?
Ye gods forbid! no thought of flight
Is in their minds, for laurels bright,
Reap'd from the fields of conquer'd Gaul,
Would wither'd from their chieftain fall,
And like the sear leaves on an autumn day,
When hollow winds through shrivell'd branches play,
Enshroud his glories with a funeral pall.

Hark! his well-known voice is heard,
And Romans kindle at the word:
"By your fame in former fields,
Soldiers, forward! raise your shields,
Struggle onward to the land,
And meet the savage hand to hand:
Honour to the first to reach
And plant our eagles on the beach:

Shall rude barbarians with untutor'd force
Arrest our practised arms and stay our course?"

Swift they plunge into the wave,
First, the fearless and the brave,
Their hollow bucklers loudly ring
With darts the distant foemen fling,
And brazen helmets echo to the sound;
A tempest falls, above, around,
And blood is gushing forth from many a wound;
Yet onward still, and on they press,
Unflinching, in their dauntlessness.
The Britons rush to meet them in the sea,
With desp'rate valour seek to drive them back,
And bear them down in one combined attack,
To keep their homes, their wives, and children free.

Foot by foot—nay, inch by inch—
There's death in every blow,
Each sturdy sweep of a Roman sword
Doth lay a Briton low.
Cries and yells from far and near,
Assail the list'ning ear:
And streaming blood
Is dying with its sanguine stains the flood.

The Romans reach the land at length,
And form, and concentrate their strength,
While hardy legions through the tide,
Are rushing onward still to battle at their side.

As the foam is flung back from the surf-beaten-rock,
So the Britons are roll'd and dispersed by the shock:
Can naked barbarians, untutor'd, unskill'd,
Though their bosoms with spirits heroic are fill'd,
Contend with success, and the prowess withstand
Of heroes long train'd under Cæsar's command?
Where wisdom and conduct with courage unite
To make them resistless, unrivall'd in fight.
With the ardour and madness derived from despair,
The true-hearted savages frantickly dare
On their iron-clad foemen undaunted to rush—
Again and again their fierce onset they push,
Till broken, and scatter'd, and driven to yield,
They leave their invaders the lords of the field.

But couch'd not like a former boast,
Was Cæsar's message from the coast,

To greet the lords at home:
" I came, I saw, I overcame,"
Those haughty words of deathless fame,
Were not again for Rome.
With empty professions of hollow submission,
He hasten'd away from his new acquisition,

A hundred years of blood and crime, of rapine and of wrong
Succeeded this descent, and roll'd the tide of war along,
And gallant deeds of arms were wrought, and much of cruelty,
Ere ceased the Celtic race to claim their birthright to be free:
But craft, disunion, treachery, and desultory rage
Undisciplined, are fearful odds successful war to wage
Against the most consummate skill and high civilization,
Due order, concert, means applied in proper combination:
Barbaric courage strives in vain, unless the noble soul

Can leaven with its qualities and animate the whole.
The Britons to the Roman yoke have bent the
neck at length,
Subdued, they seek protection thence, from their
enslavers' strength :
The virtues that the freeman knows, are smother'd
in the slave,
Hereditary bondsmen,—oh, expect not to be
brave !
All those whose independent souls the victor's
sway disdain'd
Have fled to hills and fastnesses, the vile alone
remain'd.—

Three centuries have roll'd away
Beneath the mighty Cæsars' sway ;
Imperial Rome, with energetic hand,
Hath proudly borne the sceptre of command:
Just to its friends, to enemies severe,
It ruled as much by lenity as fear;
But when rebellion raised aloft its head,
Its stern resentment struck the world with dread,
And kept each discontented spirit down,
Scared by the terrors of that haughty frown.

But Time, the parent of decay,
The Capitol hath sapp'd—
The city of the seven hills,
In ease luxurious lapp'd,
Is nodding to its fall, the cup o'erflows,
Red with the stream of human crimes and woes.
Rotten at core, its vast, unwieldly strength
Heaves with convulsive throes, until, at length,
Reeling, it falls. Earth trembles at the sound,
The ruin of its greatness strews the ground.

The fierce barbarians of the north
Against her weakness rushing forth,
Carry terror and dismay,
Rending provinces away,
And Rome's old deeds of outrage well repay.
Press'd from without, they now recal
Their legions from the British shore,
In Spain, and Italy, and Gaul,
To concentrate their strength the more:
Thus, when we seek the citadel to guard,
We strip the outposts of their usual ward.

To palliate the deed of wrong,
The weak had suffer'd from the strong,

By independence lost at first—
Those arts in which themselves were versed,
The skill, the craft, the learning of great Rome
Transplanted, found in conquer'd states a home:
The vanquish'd felt their loss a real gain,
They ceased their savage freedom to retain,
But learnt, instead, the arts of polish'd life—
Internal peace, in lieu of endless strife.

And now, before they left the land,
O'er which so long they held command,
They strove to rouse the Britons' pride,
"To seize the good the gods provide;"
Urged them to put their ancient valour on,
To guard their native land when they were gone,
Repair'd their towns, and strengthen'd to the north,
The wall between the rapid Clyde and Forth;
Their former lessons having read anew,
They spread their swelling sails and thus withdrew.

Left to themselves, with freedom new endowed,
The necks which foreign masters long had bowed
Received the gift like slaves; whose souls the chain
Of servitude had branded with the stain

Of base dependence ; in whose mean desires
No spark was left of those bright glowing fires
Their fathers burnt with, who preferr'd to die
Than live and quail beneath a tyrant's eye.
Oh, men! degenerate and base!
Children of a feeble race,
Stain to manhood—willing slaves
Worthy but of cowards' graves!
Are ye fallen thus so low
Rushing wildly to and fro,
Wailing that the Roman sway,
Is pass'd from you and yours away?
Ah, yes! 'tis the sense of what evils impend,
Now none are among you to rouse and defend,
'Tis the shadowing forth of the future, that rolls
Like an ominous cloud o'er your dastardly souls.
Ah, well may ye weep, for the low'ring north
Will speedily pour her fierce warriors forth
To ravage and slaughter, and gather the prey,
While screaming the eagles are scenting the fray!

Like wolves on the flock when the dogs are withdrawn,
The savages, hearing the Romans were gone,

Arose in their pride, and, with buckler and
brand,
Prepared to assail and burst in on the land.
First on the northern wall
The Pictish warriors fall,
The weak defenders overcome with fear,
Flee from the charge like herds of startled deer.
In slender wicker boats
The hardy Scotsman floats,
Across the Forth he points his daring way,
Thirsting for blood and eager for the fray.

Landed safely on the strand,
Like a torrent o'er the land,
They rush impetuous with resistless force;
None to check or stay their hand
Interpose—or give command
To stop them in their devastating course.
Oh! dreadful the warfare, where savage ferocity,
Indulges its instincts of race animosity,
And tiger-like riots in carnage and slaughter,
While blood in a torrent is flowing like water—
No generous feeling of common humanity,
No chivalrous daring combined with urbanity,

To relieve the dark picture of madness and crime,
And rob of its horrors the blood-boltered time!

Raging fierce and uncontroll'd,
Burning, not with thirst of gold,
But flocks and herds, a welcome prey,
They seize on all within their way;
The timid Britons flee before their face,
And so invite them to pursue the chase.
Wasted, desolate, and bare,
Were Britain's hills and valleys fair
Her sons unburied on the ground,
Spread horrid pestilence around,
And famine's gnawing tooth and haggard eye,
Like a destroying angel stagger'd by.

Thus want, and pestilence, and war,
Like furies fasten'd to the car
Of death, their baleful pinions spread,
Filling the land with gloom and dread.
The cities of Britain though sorely affrighted,
Yet made some resistance from being united,
Repell'd from their walls and awhile kept at bay,
The prowling invaders wide ranging for prey.

By greenwood and meadow, o'er valley and hill,
The Northern men wander and plunder at will;
The track of their footsteps all blacken'd and bare
Is vocal alone with the cry of despair;
The wolf from his covert rush'd out to partake
With the raven and kite, of the slaughter they make.
Once the Britons cry for aid
To Rome, obtain'd the boon they pray'd.
A legion came, and clear'd the ravaged land
With ready speed, from every roving band,
Drove them for refuge fleeing in disorder,
To seek their mountain fastness o'er the border.

But these withdrawn, another year
In larger hosts the Picts appear,
Some took the east, and some the west,
While others through the centre prest,
And mark'd their progress through the nation
By scenes of blood and desolation.
The brave among the Britons fight,
Their safety others seek in flight;
While scenting like a wolf their prey,
The rovers burn, and rob, and slay.

Unburied lie upon the plain,
The fest'ring bodies of the slain,
Smoke and flame ascend on high,
Flashing redly to the sky,
And ringing sadly through the air,
Arose the battle yell, the wailing of despair.

Trembling with the fear of dying,
Sometimes fighting, often flying,
Lacking the ardent mind, the daring will,
Which tears the laurels oft from strength and skill,
And bids defiance to the world in arms,
Of men whom love of independence warms,
The Britons interpose an ineffectual bar;
While to the horrors of barbaric rage,
Dire pestilence and hollow famine wage
With force united, dreadful war,
And roll along the wheels of fell destruction's car.

Harassed, terrified, perplext,
With threefold evils vext,
The wretched natives once again besought
The aid of Rome, and thus the elders wrote:

"Fathers, save us, interpose
Between us and our cruel foes;
We know not where to turn or flee,
Before us lies the raging sea,
And fierce barbarians at our back,
With deadly rage pursue the track;
The only choice our fate affords
Is death by water, or their swords.
That drives us back to lie in bloody graves,
They force us on to perish by the waves."

But dread Attila threaten'd Rome,
Who wanted all her strength at home.
She sent no aid, but urged them in reply,
To *face* their wild pursuers, not to *fly*.
"Oh! fight ye," they said, "as your forefathers fought
When the legions of Cæsar your island shores sought;
Maintain that high bearing and courage undaunted
The gallant Caractacus daringly vaunted,
When brought in his fetters a captive to Rome,
Was the birthright of all in his own island home.

Then rouse up your spirits and dare to be free,
With your face to the foe, and your back to the
sea,
And death if it comes shall be wedded to fame,
No stain on your honour—no blot on your name."

THE SHIPWRECK.

'Tis night! The silver moon shines bright,
  There's silence on the deep:
And basking in her mellow light,
  The mighty waters sleep.

The stars that gem the blue expanse
  Are mirror'd in the wave,
While coldly pale the moonbeams dance
  O'er many an ocean cave.

A holy calm of tranquil rest
  Wrapp'd earth, and sea, and air;
It seemed the region of the blest,
  So lovely, still, and fair.

But soon a change comes o'er the scene,
Black clouds begin to rise,
And overcast the blue serene,
And darkness veils the skies.

The western gale, with fitful moan,
Sweeps onward with a sigh,
Foretelling, by its hollow tone,
Of danger lurking nigh.

But, hark! what sound breaks on the night,
Low floating on the breeze?
What bursts majestic on the sight,
Propell'd with swanlike ease?

A ship, before the rising gale,
Comes scudding o'er the sea;
The wind which swells her flutt'ring sail,
Seems not to move more free.

The careful watch their vigils keep,
The pilot walks the deck;
While all below profoundly sleep,
Nor think nor dream of wreck.

With anxious eye he views the change
Creep slowly on the night;
And carefully he scans the range
Of all within the sight.

He marks the still increasing force
With which the billows roll:
The wind now grown from murmurs hoarse,
To one continued howl.

No means that skill and caution urge,
That seaman bold neglects,
To aid the ship to breast the surge,
Which madly sweeps the decks.

The spirit of the storm is loosed,
And rides upon the blast;
With wailing cry, and sounds confused,
It speeds sublimely past.

The sounds the startled sleepers rouse
To sense of dangers near;
With hurried haste they don their clothes,
Their pale cheeks blanch'd with fear.

Now lifted on the crested wave,
The ship is borne on high;
Now helpless, downward to the grave
She headlong seems to fly.

Her heaving timbers creak and strain
Beneath the whirlwind's lash;
While o'er her sides the roaring main
And raging billows dash.

A furious blast comes rushing by—
Great God, some help afford!
What means that sad, despairing cry?
The mast goes by the board!

Some wretches by its fall are laid
Helpless amid the foam;
With one faint shriek, one cry for aid,
They sink into their tomb!

Dismasted now and rudderless,
The sport of wind and wave,
No refuge near, in their distress,
No hand outstretch'd to save,—

Abandoned to her destiny,
The ship is dash'd along,
While prayers, oaths, and blasphemy,
Break from the frantic throng.

With thrilling cries of wild despair,
Some loudly shriek for aid:
While others strive to offer pray'r,
Who ne'er before have prayed.

But over all, the tempest's din
Lifts up its awful voice,
And sounds of woe, and words of sin
Are blended with its noise.

They now approach the rocky shore,
With foaming breakers white,
O'er which the hollow surges roar,
Dash'd with resistless might.

Speechless, aghast, with terror dumb,
The sight each soul appals;
By shudd'ring horror overcome,
The senseless clamour falls.

Resistless on, the ship is borne,
And hurl'd against the rock,
A thousand fragments from it torn,
Attest the dreadful shock.

Again! again! with fury dash'd,
Its splinters strew the wave!
The wretched crew below are wash'd,
To find an ocean grave.

Loud shrieks, and yells, and piercing cries,
Burst from them as they sank;
With desp'rate grasp each victim tries
To cling to sail or plank:

And arms are wildly thrown about,
And quick and gasping breath,
Speak the strong swimmer's efforts stout,
To 'scape impending death.

But all in vain! for one by one,
Each dark head disappears:
The last faint cry and stifling moan
Is quench'd in ocean's tears.

Nor those who cling convulsively
To fragments floating round,
Are doomed a better fate to see
Than what their comrades found.

For, onward by the current borne
Full on the rocky coast,
Their mangled bodies, bleeding, torn,
Are lifeless corpses tost.

But one alone, of all that band,
Heaved on a mountain wave,
Is senseless cast upon the land,
Where feeling hearts may save.

Attended with assiduous care,
(Though long benumb'd he lay,)
His pulse returns—with vacant stare
His eyes unclose to day.

But wounded, bruised, his wasted strength
Long in the balance hung;
And days and nights their weary length
Have tedious dragg'd along—

Ere he, that solitary one,
  Upon the cliff once more
Stood gazing, sadly and alone,
  Along that ocean shore.

Again, the sea was calm and smooth,
  And show'd its placid breast,
So still and fair—it well might soothe
  The troubled soul to rest.

Not e'en a ripple seemed to move
  Along its glassy side;
But harmless, gentle as a dove,
  Appeared its treach'rous tide.

Thus often to the eyes of youth,
  The *world* alluring shows
Its words of peace, and looks of ruth
  Conceal its hidden woes.

Till fairly launch'd, in eager chase,
  Merrily on they go,
Nor dream beneath its smiling face
  Is mask'd a deadly foe.

With buoyant hearts, life's course is set,
Hope at the helm presides:
And trusting Faith, unwounded yet,
All anxious care derides.

But as they glide supinely on,
Unconscious of mischance,
Some rude assault, not thought upon,
Awakes them from their trance.

Perchance on Pleasure's sunken rocks,
By youthful folly drawn,
Their noonday shipwreck idly mocks
Their morning's opening dawn.

Or on Ambition's breakers lost,
By Pride or Av'rice led,
Too late they *feel*, by bitter cost,
The ills they should have fled.

WATER.

A TEMPERANCE ODE.

In praise of the deep delights of wine,
Anacreon woke his tuneful lyre,
And warbled its joys in strains divine,
With the thrilling force of a poet's fire:
But the noisy glee
Of the debauchee
Possesses no magic charms for me.

I love the liquid that leaves no sting
To rob the cup of its purest pleasure;
A cooling draught from the bubbling spring
Shall be the theme of my humbler measure:
Where the wild Bee sips
With her honey'd lips,
And the Martin his glossy plumage dips.

Let the toper boast the joys that flow
From the mantling bowl all joys surpass—
While his face reflects the ruddy glow
And purple hue of the teeming glass,
Like the flaming sight
Of a beacon light,
It burns to warn and not to invite.

Refreshing, colourless, sweet and pure,
Fair water flows from the green hill side,
And he is the truest epicure
Who drinks with pleasure its sparkling tide:
From its secret cell,
Through the mossy dell,
Flowers and verdure its progress tell.

WATER.

When bursting from chaos, the newly form'd earth,
In the fulness of time had accomplish'd its birth,
And order and beauty from darkness awoke,
As the light of the sun on the universe broke;
Then the might of Jehovah walked forth on the deep,
Unsealing the eyelids of day from their sleep,
To witness each power prescribe its due bound,
And dry land arise by the sea girdled round.

The firm earth was fitted its stores to produce,
As food for all creatures and man's special use,
Corn, grass, fruits, and spices, were given to eat,
But water alone as a drink with the meat:

To its fountains the creatures of earth and of air,
All reeking and panting, with rapture repair,
The Lion and Vulture, the Ox and Giraffe,
But man, foolish man, hath forgotten to quaff.

Oh! water—sweet water! thou fluid divine,
Ethereal essence, more precious than wine:
Thou life-blood of nature, without whose supply,
All things that have being must wither and die!
Too prone to o'erlook from its universality,
And estimate lightly its lavish vitality,
We feel not the whole of its value, until
We faint on the desert, and sigh for the rill.

SONG.

When day's golden light from the Heavens is fading,
And the throstle is piping her lay in the vale,
When softness and beauty the landscape pervading,
And music is heard in the whispering gale:
Oh! meet me by the hawthorn tree,
And I will breathe my vows to thee!

When brightly the star of the evening is shining,
And the glow-worm's pale lustre the harvest moon greets,
Come, wander with me, where the woodbine entwining
Around the old oak, is exhaling its sweets:
I tarry by the hawthorn-tree
To breathe my vows of love to thee.

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